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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE Fascist revolt in Austria has succeeded, as it did in Germany, with the connivance of the reactionary Government in office. With France fully occupied and Pilsudski on good terms with Germany, foreign intervention was out of the question. The Heimwehr could safely rise with the assurance that Dr. Dollfuss would abet them in their plan of "cleaning up Austria." The cleansing process consisted in destroying the Social Democratic party, whose work in Vienna has been the finest achievement in any country in post-war Europe. Since the Social Democrats had offered the Chancellor their full support if he would retain free institutions and defend Austrian independence, there is no excuse for his treachery. Faced with destruction in any case, the Austrian Socialists chose to die fighting. The alternative was to submit and be beaten up as their comrades were in Germany. With their heroic defeat liberty and democracy are dead—for the time being, at least—in Central Europe, and no one can foresee how soon the battle will be renewed. The slaughter in Vienna reveals even more clearly the nature of Fascism: it will not have been in vain if it steels the wills of those who mind about liberty in the countries in which it survives.

The Truce in France

M. Doumergue has formed his "Government of Truce and Reconciliation"—not without some difficulty. It is really a coalition of the Radicals and the Right, extending from the Neo-Socialist, M. Marquet (who is allowed by his party to enter the Cabinet "as a private person"), through M. Herriot and M. Tardieu to M. Marin. The Socialists and those still further to the Right than M. Marin hold aloof. The Government will almost certainly start with the support of a large majority in the Chamber. Its first duty must be to pass the Budget, and the one thing that Frenchmen seem determined in no circumstances to tolerate is a balanced budget. It must then clear up the Stavisky case, a difficult and dangerous operation, which is apparently to be handed over to a Parliamentary Commission. Meanwhile, it must face the—for it—eternal problem of combining in the same Cabinet M. Herriot and M. Tardieu; M. Doumergue's solution for the moment is to balance them against each other "without portfolio."

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There remains the real task of "truce and reconciliation." The truce has for the moment precariously been established. The fighting and the rioting have died down. The *camelots du roi* and the Communists have retired to their several camps; the shop windows are being mended. The general strike on Monday took

place without disorder except for sporadic outbreaks in Marseilles and elsewhere. It was intended, and has apparently for the moment been accepted, as a warning from the working classes of France that the animal will defend itself if attacked. That is the crux of the problem of "reconciliation" which confronts M. Doumergue. The struggle between the forces of Fascism on the one side and of liberty and democracy on the other underlies the events of the last ten days in Paris. There can be no "reconciliation" between these two, and sooner or later M. Doumergue must choose the one or the other. The political complexion of the Right wing of his Cabinet is not reassuring to the friends of democracy and the Republic.

Whither Spain?

Spain continues to hover uneasily on the edge of something which may prove to be only a temporary strike of builders or may develop into the "Social Revolution," the imminence of which Señor Prieto and Señor Largo Caballero have been announcing during the past weeks. "The masses must be prepared, not only spiritually, but above all materially, for the revolution which is to transform society," said Largo Caballero—the "Spanish Lenin"—speaking at the Printers' Union; and his words were greeted by cries of "Long Live the Machine Guns!" The Socialists, who have now dropped their more conservative pilots like Besteiro from their Trade Union Executive Committee, declare that they are acting to save the country from Fascism or Hitlerism. On the other hand, Señor Gil Robles, the leader of the Catholic Social Party, has warned his followers that, unless the Right can govern, Spain will be ruled by a Soviet regime for three years at least. Perhaps these contradictory threats cancel each other out. "Aqui no pasa nada"—"Here nothing happens"—the Spaniard exclaims in his anxiety to assure foreigners of the general tranquillity. But since assassination in broad daylight is now a daily occurrence in the capital, one may be excused if one accepts these statements with a little scepticism. A violent change in the near future is likely, and it looks as if, despite the swing to the Right in most European countries, the new regime in Spain (if it comes) may be of a pronounced Left wing character.

The Russian Trade Agreement

The Anglo-Russian Trade Agreement is on the point of signature as we write. This is a happy ending to a long—an unnecessarily long—and foolish chapter. There were hitches that caused anxiety even in the later stages of the negotiations—demands by the Canadian timber interests, claims of special privilege for the British Embassy in Moscow, insistence by the Lena Goldfields on their full pound of flesh. But these have been disposed of by more or less reasonable compromises—or, in the Lena case, by the British Government washing its hands of the dispute and leaving it to be settled directly by the parties. The new agreement regulates trade between the two countries by establishing a fair balance of imports and exports, and it will, if we understand it aright, give a stimulus to British exports, and not merely aim at keeping imports from Russia down to the lowest possible level. Both countries stand to benefit substantially with the exchange of their products thus put on a clear footing, and we hope that there will be no more political antics to disturb commercial relations.

Mr. Runciman's Quarrel with France

Mr. Runciman has succeeded in forcing us into a quarrel with the French over their quota policy, at a time when it is of vital importance that Great Britain and France should be on the best possible terms. There is, indeed, a tradition that nations can dispute violently over commercial policy without interrupting their political amity; but what foundation of fact this doctrine ever had it has largely lost since political and commercial policy have become as closely intertwined as they are to-day. We object to the French quotas on British goods, on the ground that they discriminate against British trade. The French reply that they have no wish to discriminate unfairly, and are fully prepared to grant us the most favoured terms if we will give them a *quid pro quo*. Thereupon Mr. Runciman goes off the deep end, though this is precisely the line we have taken in our dealings with Scandinavia and the Argentine, swopping quotas of meat and other food products for quotas of British coal. Mr. Runciman, after the manner of Mr. J. H. Thomas, claps emergency discriminating duties on French goods coming into Great Britain. France naturally retorts by denouncing her trade agreements with us—and there we are, embarked on a commercial war in which national prestige is involved on both sides.

The Unemployment Bill

The House of Commons continues to hop over important clauses of the Unemployment Bill because the guillotine procedure allows no time to discuss them. Thus, on Tuesday, the vital question of the terms on which it is proposed to pay off the Unemployment Fund's debt to the Exchequer was left without a single word of discussion. This situation is so ludicrous that Mr. MacDonald has had to promise so to arrange the Report stage as to allow as much time as possible for the clauses which have been skipped in Committee. But this is no solution. We do not suggest that the House of Commons ought to find time to debate this long and technical measure line by line; that is out of the question. But it is quite obvious that the present method of handling Bills of this sort is entirely unsatisfactory. Reference to a Standing Committee is useless, as Standing Committees are worked at present; they have no special expertness or authority, and the work has largely to be done over again in the House. Clearly there ought to be special bodies, including representatives of the groups chiefly concerned, before which measures of this sort can be raked over before coming before Parliament at all; and, no less clearly, the amount of detail we put into our Bills ought to be as small as possible. This week the main question has been whether industries, subject to little unemployment, and salary-earners getting over £250 a year ought to be brought within the scope of insurance. In our view they ought, and this view found a good deal of support in the House.

Coal and Iron Schemes

The Government's new Mines Bill is coming in at once. Coal for export is no longer to be under control in respect of output, but it will still be controlled in respect of price. British coalowners, in effect, can sell as much coal to foreigners as they can get foreigners to buy; but they must not sell it cheap. In the home market, both output and prices are to remain controlled, and power is to be

given to the control authority to co-ordinate the prices charged in the different coalfields. In other words, the danger that the consumer may get some cheap coal through one district undercutting another is to be removed. The scheme now under discussion for the iron and steel industry is of a similar sort. It is essentially a plan for holding up the price of raw steel by means of national combination. That is why the makers and exporters of finished steel goods are against it, especially as they are to be given very little share in the control of the proposed control association for the industry as a whole. Neither in the Government's scheme for coal nor in the employers' scheme for steel is there the smallest sign of a real intention to bring about industrial organisation. They are both "price and security" schemes, on the familiar capitalist model.

Contraceptives in the House of Lords

The House of Lords debate on contraceptives was fantastic. Lord Dawson of Penn made a quite admirable defence of birth-control, explaining that society was in every way the better for determining that "choice, not chance, should decide birth," and arguing that contraceptive methods should be made available to every class of the community. But this speech was in defence of a Bill for the restriction of the sale, display and advertisement of contraceptives! It is true that commercialism and prudery have between them led to many undesirable methods of marketing contraceptives. But Lord Dawson's proposal could only have the effect of increasing the evil that contraception is least easy for those who most need its benefits, and it was therefore eagerly seized upon as a useful reform by the Bishop of London and other vehement defenders of obscurantim or class privilege. From the Bishop's speech we learnt that the Public Morality Council of London counts the shops where contraceptives are sold and watches those who buy them. Innocent colonials, he explained, are shocked at this wicked London, where the notion that it is more moral to restrict birth than to bring unwanted lives into the world is so rife. Why did not Lord Dawson avoid this embarrassing support by introducing a Bill to set up decent clinics and to abolish the restrictions which now make it difficult for the poor to obtain knowledge?

The L.C.C. Elections

Mr. Webbe, the leader designate of the Municipal Reformers on the London County Council, tells us that the only issue at the forthcoming election is that of "sane, efficient and progressive government" by his party or "a gigantic experiment in Socialism" by Labour. What do sanity, efficiency and progress mean when translated from the general into the particular? Saving the rates? Opposition to any and every extension of public ownership or control? Mr. Webbe denies that the social services have been starved; he denies that the administration of Public Assistance has been harsh. But there is a cloud of witness to confute him on these points. As for the housing programme of the Council, it is notoriously inadequate, and the consciousness of that perhaps had something to do with the pushing through of a motion last Tuesday to set up a new special committee for dealing with slum clearance. The mover declared that this was not an electioneering stunt. Of course not; but it may happen to come in useful on M.R. platforms during the election campaign. Whether, after that, it will make for more sanity, efficiency and progress, is another matter. The Southwark Housing Association, by the way, in a booklet just published reminds us that at the last census, in 1931, there were 35,000 people living in overcrowded conditions in that Borough alone, and it is considered that 10,000 new dwellings are wanted there. What is the Municipal Reform Party's estimate of Southwark's housing needs?

A Profitable Campaign

It must be presumed that Lords Rothermere and Beaverbrook are not secretly in the pay of the Co-operative Societies. If they were, they could not advertise them better. Their preposterous campaign continues day after day, and it has all the sinister characteristics of similar attacks on working-class institutions which have taken place before Fascist revolutions in other countries. The object is to rally the small trader against the working class. But the Co-operatives are very firmly established in this country, and sensible middle-class women, to whom all the advantages of Co-operative shopping are explained so fully by the press Barons, are apparently also becoming Co-operators in increasing numbers. During the last five weeks, while this campaign has been waged against the Co-operatives, the London Society alone has enrolled 30,000 new members, has received £70,000 additional share capital, and has increased its weekly turn-over by £14,000, as compared with a similar period last year!

A Children's Minimum

An important meeting was held in the House of Commons on Thursday under the auspices of the newly formed "Children's Minimum Committee," of which Miss Eleanor Rathbone is the chairman. The purpose is to press on the Government four main points—a daily ration of fresh milk for all children in the State-aided schools and for pre-school children; compulsory, and not merely permissive, provision of school meals by local education authorities; increased allowances for children of the unemployed; the encouragement of rent rebates in cases of inadequate family incomes. These are all reforms that we have advocated in our columns, and we hope that the Committee will succeed in enlisting the active support of men and women of all parties in the campaign. The present situation in regard to milk—to take only one of the four points—is both tragic and ridiculous. There are some 5,000,000 children badly in need of the nourishment which they could get from milk, and can get from nothing else so easily and so economically. And there is a huge glut of milk waiting to go down the children's throats, so soon as somebody will take the small trouble of arranging for it to reach them. The Minister of Agriculture, we are sure, will offer no opposition, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer need not be alarmed. Here is a chance for the National Government to do something, for once in a way, really national.

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THE AUSTRIAN INFERNO

THERE was an aged prophet at the Peace Conference in 1919 who watched the signing of the Treaty of St. Germain. "That," he said, "is the harvest of one war, and the seed of another." Nobody listened to him then. The victors believed in the eternity of their victory; the victims were hopeless and impotent; idealists saw salvation in the League. Now, after fifteen years of struggling and blundering, the prophecy is coming true. It is civil war in Austria to-day; to-morrow or the day after it may be European war. For the bloodshed in Vienna the immediate responsibility rests on the Fascists led by Prince Starhemberg and Major Fey; in the last analysis it is the outcome of the policy pursued by the Great Powers. They left a truncated Austria ringed round by hostile and jealous neighbours. They propped it up time and again with loans, offered it advice and read it sermons—did everything in fact except allow it to join its fortunes to Germany—just and safe though that would have been when Germany was Stresemann's and Brüning's Germany. Austria has for many years been an awkward pawn; now that Hitler has come into the game there is grave danger that the pawn will queen.

But for the moment attention is concentrated on the internal struggle. It is a desperate struggle in which the Austrian Socialists have shown heroic qualities of resistance that contrast sharply with the collapse of their German brethren a few months ago. The clash had, of course, been long foreseen. It might have been avoided had Dr. Dollfuss chosen differently. When he emerged last summer as the saviour of his country against the Nazi menace, he could have had the whole-hearted support of the Social Democrats, and he could have had no better support. He wanted it, but he was not prepared to pay the price that was demanded for it. That price was no more than reasonable guarantees of constitutionalism. But Dr. Dollfuss was already committed to unconstitutional government; he was three-quarters Fascist himself, and he had at his elbow a body of hundred per cent. Fascists, to whom the Socialists were no less detestable—fundamentally, indeed, more detestable—than the Nazis. And with these eventually he threw in his lot, alienating some of his own Christian Social and Agrarian supporters as well as the whole body of Socialists. The Heimwehr Fascists, under the leadership of the ruthless Major Fey, were determined to have the Socialist blood, and they made their preparations for it without regard for any compunction that the feeble Chancellor may have felt. One measure after another was carried out for the repression of the Socialists, and there only remained the final blow which should overthrow their regime in Vienna and destroy their Party.

That blow was delivered last Monday at Linz. There was armed resistance to the attack of the Heimwehr there and in Graz and Steyr, and on a more formidable scale in the capital itself, and within a few hours the Government and the Heimwehr flags were floating over the Vienna Town Hall, the Socialist burgomaster and other prominent leaders were under arrest, and the Party was proscribed. That means the close of an era of municipal government and social reforms, which has enormously raised the standard of life of the working class in Vienna, and which has been admired by many who do not subscribe to the Socialists' tenets. The fighting is not over as we write; but stronghold after stronghold has been captured, and the end cannot be far off. There have been heavy casualties and an immense destruction of property. There will, we fear, be savage punishment meted out by the Government to the prisoners they have taken. If there is it will be punishment by the guilty of the innocent; for no honest observer can say that this conflict was provoked by the Socialists, or that their aim was anything other than the defence of civic liberties. It has been a gallant defence, and we hope it will prove not to have been utterly futile. It may help to encourage the drooping spirits of those who are engaged—or will presently find themselves engaged—in opposing the advance of tyranny elsewhere. It may even have some salutary effects on the policy of the Powers.

What the Powers will do in the new situation, no one can predict with any confidence. There is probably less agreement to-day than there ever was about the problem of Austria. So far as Austria's own regime is concerned, there will be regrets in France and in Czechoslavakia at the final disappearance of democracy (which, incidentally, neither France nor Czechoslavakia has done much to protect); there will, of course, be none in Italy or in Germany. But it is not merely a question of the establishment of Fascism, but of what kind of Fascism it is to be, whether Austria will be affiliated, so to speak, to Rome or to Berlin. At the moment the Austrian Nazis are banned, and the Government and the Starhemberg party are violently anti-German; they are in fact preparing to appeal to the League against Hitlerite propaganda and Hitlerite designs. Feeble as the League is, and pusillanimous as its principal members generally are in upholding the Covenant, they—or at least the French, the Italians and the Czechs—may be expected to bestir themselves in this matter, where they consider their own vital interests to be engaged. Nor is it likely that Herr Hitler will think this the right moment to rush into Austria; that would be suicidal. But the Austrian Nazi movement is very far from dead, and there are signs that the hostility between the two Fascist factions is not so universal or so deep-rooted as it looks. Many believe that the Heimwehr's offensive against the Socialists has only been clearing the ground for the Nazis. In any case, it will be Hitler's best policy, and the Austrian Nazis', to bide their time and to continue their tactics of intrigue and permeation. It is not even certain that they stand to lose in the long run by an Austro-Hungarian *rapprochement*. Dr. Dollfuss has been hobnobbing with General Gömbös in Budapest, and it seems possible that closer relations may be established between the two ex-partners in the former monarchy. But that would not necessarily be a permanent alternative to closer relations with Germany. Hungary was a constituent in the old *Mitteleuropa* ideal, and Hungary is not outside Hitler's visions of a new Germanic empire.

In considering these possibilities we are not forgetting French or Italian objections to the aggrandisement of Germany. We are merely envisaging complications and dangers which may confront France and Italy—and a France and an Italy that will, in face of a disintegrated League and a re-armed Germany, be weaker than they are now. So far as this country is concerned, Central Europe is a long way off, and Lord Beaverbrook and the isolationists think that, having done our part in worsening the Austrian problem, we can now safely wash our hands of the whole

business. That is an illusion; a continental upheaval cannot fail to have calamitous effects on this island. But we need not argue that point; the British Government still plays its role in the League, and it will be compelled, little as it likes making decisions, to decide what it is going to do about Dr. Dollfuss's appeal. It can do nothing now to save Austria from the dictatorship which it repudiates so warmly for England. Whether it can prevent her from ultimately falling into the German maw remains to be seen. But in present circumstances there seems only one choice open, which is to join with Italy and France in protecting one pack of Fascists against another. It is a sorry alternative; but Dollfuss and Fey must be deemed a lesser evil than Hitler, alike for the Austrians and the rest of us.

A CHARTER FOR THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE

THE Report of the Hadow Committee on Local Government Officers presents a striking contrast to the feeble documents produced by many recent Royal Commissions and Committees. Its standard, both as regards form and substance, is much higher than that to which we have unfortunately become accustomed. It presents a boldly conceived, coherent policy of a highly constructive character, expressed in telling and unambiguous language.

The Committee was appointed in 1930 by Mr. Arthur Greenwood, when he was Minister of Health, in response to a recommendation made by the Royal Commission on Local Government that an inquiry should be set on foot. Its terms of reference were to inquire into and make recommendations on the qualifications, recruitment, training and promotion of Local Government Officers. Such was the origin of the first official inquiry into the municipal service ever held in this country.

In view of the size and importance of the service, it is remarkable that no previous investigation had been made. Excluding school teachers, members of the police forces, and manual workmen, the local government service comprises about 130,000 officers. It includes, in addition to clerks and administrative assistants, an army of professional and technical officers engaged on duties connected with public health functions, maternity and child welfare, highway repair and maintenance, public assistance, libraries and museums, housing and town planning, lunacy and mental deficiency, elementary and secondary education, and all the other multitudinous services which have been entrusted to the local authorities.

Despite the magnitude and importance of their responsibilities the local authorities have made no systematic attempt whatever to ensure that they should have at their disposal a body of officers equipped with the education, training and qualities of character necessary to enable the services to be efficiently administered. Their policy has been merely to insist on the eternal right of every local authority to appoint exactly whom it desires to every post in its service.

The usual practice has been to recruit girls and boys, generally without examination, at fourteen or fifteen years of age at one end of the scale, and to reserve the chief positions at the other end of the scale for men with a professional training, such as solicitors, doctors, engineers or accountants. The idea that there might exist a science of public administration has never occurred to most local authorities. The average councillor has been accustomed to regard the Town Clerk as an ordinary member of the legal profession, although his work has hardly anything in common with that of a solicitor or barrister in private practice, and to consider the Medical Officer of Health as just another doctor. Patronage has been rampant among many local authorities, and open competition conspicuous by its absence in most cases. The acceptance of large premiums by full-time professional officers from pupils desiring to be taught the public business in municipal offices is almost universal, with the result that the impecunious rank and file of the service have been confronted with an insuperable barrier to the attainment of the leading positions, with loss to themselves and the public.

Two forces have been at work making for progress. In the first place, the Ministry of Health has gradually compelled local authorities, by a combination of financial inducement and statutory coercion, to appoint properly qualified full time medical officers, sanitary inspectors, health and tuberculosis visitors, and similar action has been taken by the Ministry of Transport in regard to engineers and surveyors. In the second place, the officers themselves, organised in such bodies as the National Association of Local Government Officers, have gradually developed a sense of *esprit de corps*, of corporate responsibility and vocational aspiration, which has led them to play a prominent part in demanding—and providing—improved standards of education, qualification, training and status for members of the service. By means of its summer schools, its correspondence courses, its support for university education in public administration, its examination schemes, the National Association has displayed a wide and liberal conception of its functions which the Committee does not hesitate to recognise.

In striking contrast to the progressive influence of the Central Departments and the vocational societies is the reactionary outlook of the Associations of Local Authorities. These powerful bodies have so far proved effective obstacles to any improvement in the local government service. Their attitude has hitherto been that of mere defence organisations resisting progress in almost every sphere of local government. The Summary of Evidence printed at the end of the present Report reveals clearly their utter inability to rise above the divine right of things as they are. It is worth recalling that a Joint Committee set up by the County Councils Association and the Association of Municipal Corporations in 1928 concluded that the whole question of qualifications and recruitment "is a matter which can and should properly be left to the discretion of the individual local authorities." It is scarcely surprising that the Association of Municipal Corporations advised the Hadow Committee that "no alteration of the existing system to facilitate the increased recruitment either of advanced secondary schoolboys, or graduates, is particularly desirable." The Urban District Councils Association piped up that "far-reaching new methods of recruiting officers for the service of Urban District Councils, or of training officers who have already entered the service, would not be practicable." The Rural District Councils Association finds existing methods satisfactory.

The Hadow Committee has had the courage and imagination to ignore such stagnant views, and to approach the problem from the standpoint of providing the public with the best possible service. They make a series of recommendations designed to secure that patronage and favouritism shall be abolished root and branch, and a system of competitive examinations introduced to correspond with the three main stages in our national system of education. The first stage would be at the age of 16. Candidates would have to be in possession of a school certificate and would then sit for an open competitive examination conducted by regional groups of local councils co-operating for the purpose. There would be another examination at 18 or 19 years to cater for the boys and girls who are able to continue their education to that age. Opportunities should also be made to accept a limited number of able graduates from the universities each year, to be recruited by open competitive examination by a central body, such as the Civil Service Commission.

Another series of recommendations aims at re-shaping the present situation in regard to "professional" and "lay" officers in the service. Professional officers are to be required to continue to take pupils as at present but to forgo the fees they now receive. The selection of pupils is to be approved by the Council, and control over the most important avenue

to the highest positions will thus no longer remain a personal privilege of the professional officer. Moreover, the Committee emphasise the desirability of articling junior clerical officers already in the service whenever they show signs of promise. The cast-iron monopoly which the professional officers at present possess is further attacked by the recommendation that the Clerk to the Council, at any rate in the case of the larger authorities, should be appointed primarily on account of his administrative capacity, regardless of whether he possesses legal qualifications. The practice in the civil service is the exact opposite to the municipal service in this matter. In Whitehall a man cannot get to the top of a department if he is a "professional"; the chief administrators belong to the Administrative Class, and the doctors, lawyers, chemists, etc., are restricted to the "professional" grades which remain ultimately subordinate. In the local government service the reverse occurs. A man cannot normally get command of a department unless he is a professional.

Which of these two systems is more unwise? Administrative ability of the highest kind is a rare quality in human beings; and we cannot afford to neglect it no matter whether it be accompanied by "professional" qualifications or not.

The work of local government is primarily administrative, and the Committee devotes considerable attention to the vital question of emphasising and developing administrative ability. They suggest that selected clerical officers should be transferred freely from one department to another in their early years so as to widen their experience. They advocate universal compulsory superannuation schemes so as to facilitate free movement between the officers of different local authorities. They propose that local authorities should require junior officers to pass a qualifying examination in the social sciences as a condition of promotion; they invite local authorities to support educational institutions which provide courses bearing on local government available to their officers, and to grant increments to officers who successfully complete courses of study in those subjects.

The importance of this aspect of the Report can best be understood by contrasting the policy which it embodies with the existing tendency to create a series of minute specialisms, each watertight within its own narrow boundaries. Thus, the Chartered Surveyors recommend that rating and valuation should be kept distinct. The Institute of Public Cleansing submitted that every local authority with a population over 50,000 should appoint a specially qualified cleansing officer. The Association of Managers of Sewage Disposal Works urged that every sewage works manager should pass the tests laid down by the Association. The Incorporated Society of Architects and Landed Property Agents suggested that housing managers should be qualified in land surveying. The National Association of Cemetery Superintendents said that no one should be in charge of a burial ground unless he had passed the examinations held by their Society. The National Association of Masters and Matrons of Poor Law Institutions demanded that all workhouse chiefs should hold the certificate issued by the Poor Law Examinations Board. And so on to the end of a long list of similar specialisms.

To follow such a line would betoken a return to the hidebound system of the Middle Ages, when no one could exercise a mystery save the chosen members of the fraternity. The Hadow Committee rejects this course and rightly adopts the alternative policy of encouraging a broadly conceived science of public administration, which is, indeed, the key to good government.

There is much else in the Report which merits attention. It proposes the creation of Establishment Committees in every local authority, and of a Central Advisory Committee to co-ordinate and supervise staff policy throughout the country; it contemplates the adoption of grading and salary scales, and the introduction of systematic methods of promotion and dismissal, with safeguards against unfairness; it suggests the abolition of the practice whereby local authorities make inclusive payments to officers who provide their own personal assistants; it emphasises the desirability of requiring officers to serve a period of probation. On all these questions the Committee puts forward constructive and intelligent recommendations.

There may be great difficulty in getting local authorities to accept the Report, although one hopes they will be reasonable when it comes to the point. If trouble ensues, however, public opinion will undoubtedly prove to be the decisive factor. The popular daily press has done almost nothing to inform the public of the important issues at stake.

WILLIAM A. ROBSON

A LONDON DIARY

THE fire-raising conspiracy, with its sequel in the conviction of Captain Miles, head of the London Salvage Corps, is probably the worst case of corruption revealed in this country within living memory. It takes its place with the Hatry case, the Stavisky case in France, the Boss, Sklarz and Barmat scandals in Germany, and half a dozen American scandals, symptoms of deep-seated corruption in the world's economic system. These scandals are symptoms in the sphere of business and finance of the general destruction of standards, of the breakdown of civilisation. As we have just seen in France, they may endanger the stability of Governments and rouse the mob to a curious state of impotent revolutionary fury. In England, we have hitherto prided ourselves that the standards of integrity and honesty in the public service, in the employees of semi-public bodies and large concerns, were much higher than in most other countries. (One reason why those standards have in fact probably been higher has always been that the standard of pay has been higher; in France, for instance, the inadequacy of the salaries paid is a premium on dishonesty.) That is why the revelation of corruption in the head of such a body as the London Salvage Corps comes as a peculiarly unpleasant shock to most of us. I feel myself that one moral to be drawn from the operations of Harris and Miles, is that fire insurance should not be left in the hands of private enterprise. The London Salvage Corps, owing to its functions, is a semi-public and ought to be a public body, like the fire brigade; in organisation and control it is a private enterprise. The whole insurance business, as at present organised from top to bottom on a profit-making basis, offers such temptations that the kind of corruption revealed by this case is almost inevitable.

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There are signs that progressive opinion in this country is beginning to awaken to the Fascist menace to liberty. An able manifesto on "Liberty and Democratic Leadership" has been circulated recently, and the list of signatures which have been sent in to Mr. Barratt Brown, Principal of Ruskin College, Oxford, is impressive. The names have been very carefully selected. They go as far to the left as George Lansbury and as far to the right as Lord Allen, Sir Basil Blackett and the Archbishop of York. They include about a hundred and fifty very well-known names in the religious, literary, scientific, political and Trade Union worlds. The document protests against Fascist methods—incidentally against threats of violence from the Left, too—and asserts that liberty is of supreme importance, and that "swift and far-reaching reforms" can be achieved through Parliament and without the destruction of liberty, provided that democracy is treated "with a new respect" and offered "calm, efficient and active leadership" of a new type. This sounds excellent. But what is the next step? Manifestoes by themselves butter no parsnips, and I take it that the test comes when we descend from the general principles and get down to a "bill of particulars." There is plenty of work to be done for social change and for liberty if these influential signatories are prepared to do it.

* * *

One of these immediate and practical jobs is being undertaken by another group, who have formed a Council for Civil Liberties (Embankment Chambers, 43 Villiers Street, W.C.2.).

It will be remembered that, after the hunger-march at the end of 1932, very serious allegations were made against the police, both in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and in the *Week-end Review*. Mr. A. P. Herbert, always a generous champion of civil liberty, examined the allegations that the police had used *agents-provocateurs* in an article in the *Week-end Review*. He has now agreed to co-operate with Mr. Ronald Kidd and other members of the Council in keeping a careful watch over the proceedings when the hunger-marchers reach London this year, and to investigate, with the help of experienced lawyers, any irregularities reported. This seems to me most useful work; if such a Vigilance Committee had been in existence in 1932, I doubt whether there would have been so much violence and whether, in particular, the police would have dared make the general search of the hunger-marchers' head-quarters which Mr. Justice Horridge has just pronounced illegal. An interesting examination of the Wal Hannington case, and of the whole legal position in regard to the right of Assembly and Search, has just been prepared by the Haldane Committee, and published as a pamphlet (*The Law of Public Meeting and the Right of Police Search*, price 6*d*., New Fabian Research Bureau, and Gollancz).

* * *

Last week I reported a conversation with a civil servant who told me that he wanted to join with other comfortably off people in an affirmation that he would oppose any remission of his own taxation until the unemployed had more money. I have received a number of letters from people who are anxious to make a similar affirmation. I shall be glad to hear from others. One lady writes to call my attention to a particularly terrible example of "economy"—a case that strayed into the press because it involved a suicide and therefore became "news." It appeared at the inquest that Mr. Hickley's benefit had run out and that he received 14*s*. 6*d*. a week transitional payment. After reckoning for a lodger and the rent Mrs. Hickley had £1 1*s*. to keep herself, her husband and three children. One night she went out "to look at the shops," came back and put her head in the gas oven. She was found dead by her husband. The post-mortem showed that she "was definitely in the first stages of starvation." The Coroner (who regretted the case very much and gave £1 out of his own pocket to help the family) brought in the odd verdict of "suicide while of unsound mind." Mrs. Hickley, who was thirty-three years old and an excellent mother, seems to have been quite collected about her action. Her death was not an act of insanity nor the result of a "law of nature." It was what John Bright once called a death by Act of Parliament.

* * *

The process of civilising human beings has been slow and painful; it is interesting to observe that the process of de-civilising them now going on in Germany is also attended with some difficulties. Even the Germans have grown accustomed in recent years to like a certain freedom of thought and opinion upon public questions—in their newspapers. The Nazi Government suppressed all that, and the German press was transformed into a megaphone for official statements and official speeches. The result was a great falling off in circulation, and a great increase in the circulation of foreign papers. Dr. Goebbels is extremely angry—with the unfortunate journalists; he says that they cringe like lapdogs and demands of them "independent, noble, well-meaning criticism." The difficulty obviously here is to combine the free speech of civilisation with the intolerance of barbarism. Another difficulty of passing from civilisation to barbarism is the difficulty of obtaining correct information about one's great-grandmothers. With considerable difficulty the human race in the process of ages learnt to be not very much concerned about their own and other people's grandmothers; for instance, in civilised countries a boy's right to be educated does not depend upon his grandmother's religious beliefs or the shape of her nose. The Germans have now decreed otherwise, and a very distinguished German professor tells me that the decree is causing some difficulty. Two non-Aryan grandmothers exclude you from a German university. Now the trouble about grandmothers is that you cannot tell whether they were non-Aryan unless you know something about *their* parents and your great-grandparents. In civilised countries, hundreds of people do not know even the names of all their great-grandmothers, and the professor tells me that many of his pupils are hard put to it to find out anything about them. Yet, in order to prove themselves *bona fide* Aryans and so qualify for education, they *must* prove that they had *bona fide* Aryan great-grandmothers. Clearly, the road from civilisation to barbarism is not without its difficulties.

* * *

The posters of two of Lord Rothermere's Sunday papers last Sunday looked odd side by side!

What Shall Man Believe?
Sunday Dispatch.

Armaments mean Peace
—Viscount Rothermere in
Sunday Pictorial.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Readers are invited to send us cuttings suitable for inclusion in this column. Address: 10 Great Queen Street, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

Wagging his finger at Sir Josiah, Mr. Thomas said: "I should like to tell you, Stamp, that if there was a débâcle in this country and we were both driven to work for our living, I should stand a better chance than you."—*Daily Sketch.*

Women of the Junoesque type must remember that the blood-red nail varnishes are not for them, since brilliantly coloured nails draw attention to the size of the hips.—*Daily Telegraph.*

At the age of thirty-nine and almost a bachelor incarnate. . . .
—*Times Lit. Sup.*

To "Clerk" I would say that to feel sluggish when it turns "muggy" after a cold spell is a perfectly natural feeling. But "Clerk" must try to keep awake at his work for the sake of his employer.—Correspondent in *Daily Mirror.*

Captain Cunningham-Reid said that the new aeroplane, the Hawker Super-Fury, was capable of "rising like a lift at 25 miles an hour." It was a formidable weapon against air attacks, and thus would prove a solution to the disarmament problem.—Daily paper.

Delegates in Geneva are like asparagus in May. Nevertheless my pulses quickened as I looked at the scene.—*News-Chronicle.*

The Bishop of London said that a vast trade was being done in contraceptives. He would like to make a bonfire of them and dance round it.—Report of House of Lords debate.

If its only *raison d'être* were the preparation for war then we should expect in these days of peace to find the explosives industry in Great Britain in a sad state of decline, whereas in fact it is one of the most flourishing in the country—*Times.*

If a picture cannot be made truer to the part than "Catherine the Great" it would be well if film producers left history alone . . . I advise all my readers to see it at the Leicester-square Theatre.—E. A. Baugham in *News-Chronicle.*

Owing to the excavation of coal beneath it, the ancient parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Warsop, Notts . . . is expected to sink 4½ft. before the subsidence is complete. The rector says: "No one can tell how long this may be, but we are grateful to Almighty God for allowing the coal to be worked by a company which has behaved so well to this church. The church is not now beautiful, but all that is humanly possible has been done to prevent harm. The work should be inspected by those interested. Our example, which we believe is unique, may be of very great importance to other parishes."—*Times.*

ON BEING DISINTERESTED

SIR CUTHBERT WALLACE, commenting the other day on the extent to which quack doctors are now flourishing, complained that "it was apparently impossible to persuade the public that the doctor was disinterested in his attitude towards irregular practice." It all depends, of course, on what one means by the word "disinterested." If anyone were to contend that the doctor's opinions on methods of healing are governed entirely by considerations of what pays him best, then, I think, most intelligent laymen would ridicule the charge and agree that in this matter the doctor's opinions are those of an honest man. The ordinary doctor's faith in his drugs is as genuine as the ordinary Fascist's or Communist's faith in his politics. He is as certain that Coué̇ism is charlatanry as that the earth goes round the sun. If he heard that a friend of his was trusting a herbalist to prescribe for him for rheumatic fever, he would be as unselfishly concerned as if his friend were in danger of drowning. He is convinced that cures said to be effected by osteopathy are not due to osteopathy at all, but to faith or the automatic recovery of the patient, or to the fact that the patient had nothing really the matter with him. The orthodox doctor's disbelief in the other doctors whom he calls quacks is an expression of as profoundly honest doubt as was ever felt by a Victorian agnostic.

On the other hand, doctors, like clergymen and the M.C.C., tend to take a professional view of things. They dislike everything that challenges their long-held creed. To-day, it may be retorted, both doctors and clergymen have accepted all kinds of things that would have been anathema to their predecessors of a hundred years ago. At the same time, the professional attitude to new discoveries has throughout history been usually conservative. The clergy can put forward a powerful defence for this attitude. From their point of view, the all-important truths come, not through a process of scientific discovery, but through divine revelation. Whether the earth rotates on its axis or whether the lineage of the human body can be traced back to an ancestral jellyfish is a matter of small consequence to them in comparison with the salvation of the human soul, and scientific theories have been attacked by them only in so far as they seemed to challenge the story of the scheme of salvation. Yet, even outside the ranks of the clergy, there is a natural orthodoxy of the mind which likes to keep things more or less as they are and is suspicious of what is new merely because it is new.

This is almost necessary in order that human beings may get on with their work. If the ordinary doctor began to be assailed by doubts about the efficiency of his drugs he would soon become inefficient as a doctor.

He must prescribe boldly: his very boldness is part of the cure. If a doctor gave me a strychnine tonic and told me that possibly it would do me no good, it would do me very little good. I like a doctor to look as if he knows exactly what is wrong with me and exactly what will cure it. If he prescribes a diet of red meat, I like him to do so with emphasis. I do not know which doctor benefited me more, the doctor who put me on to beef and burgundy, or the doctor who put me on to lettuces. Each of them believed in his cure so passionately that he infected me with his faith, and as a result I was in bounding health at the end of a fortnight.

Some people may agree that all this is true, but may raise the question whether it is necessary for the doctor himself in the privacy of his soul to believe in his remedies any more than it is necessary for the proprietors of patent medicines to believe in their remedies. Well, I have never met the proprietor of a patent medicine, and so I am unable to judge whether those benefactors of the human race are such business-like cynics as is commonly supposed. I have no doubt that there are cynics among them—sellers of useless coloured liquids and balls of bread-crumb—but I must say some of their advertisements read like the evangels of fanatically earnest men.

It is hard to believe that no patent medicine was ever put on the market as a result of an honest man's having been cured by a new means and wishing to make the cure available to everybody. After all, in private life, nearly everybody who is cured in a new way becomes a propagandist of the new cure even without receiving a penny. I know a man who was cured by means of lemon-juice and orange-juice and who talks lemon-juice and orange-juice to everybody who will listen to him. If he set up a shop for the sale of oranges and lemons, however, cynics would immediately begin to cast doubts on the genuineness of his convictions. His praise of the virtues of the healing juices would at once be attributed to self-interest. This, it seems to me, would be unfair, and I think it is equally unfair, as well as disturbing, to doubt the good faith of the proprietors of those patent medicines that have so greatly benefited me. I am sure there must be some proprietor of a patent medicine somewhere in the world swallowing his own drugs with the simple faith of a child. Otherwise, we should have to believe that the human race consists largely of credulous people being cured by incredulous people who prescribe for them with their tongues in their cheeks.

For my part, I am a fervent believer in the credulity of mankind in general—the credulity of the expert as well as of the ordinary man. Barristers, for example, are so credulous that they believe it will be possible to win cases that a schoolboy could see there is no chance of their winning. Brewers are so credulous that they believe that beer will inevitably do you good, while teetotallers are so credulous that they believe that beer will inevitably do you harm. Lady Astor obviously finds it impossible to conceive that a brewer could imagine that he is performing a genuine public service. Most temperance reformers deny the capacity for disinterestedness, not only in brewers, but in all who advocate the removal of certain restrictions on the sale of drink to those who want it. Yet it is possible to be as altruistic in advocating greater elasticity in the hours for the sale of drink as in advocating a return to the penny post.

I do not wish to give the brewer a halo or to suggest that he is a more disinterested public servant than the railway-director whose company announces that Skegness is so bracing or lauds the air of Dr. Brighton. But the point is that the brewer's belief in the virtues of beer is as genuine as the railway-company's belief in the virtues of Skegness or Brighton. Some temperance reformers, however, seem to think that the brewer's praise of beer is fundamentally as dishonest as a railway company's advertisement of a fever-infested swamp as a health resort would be.

As for disinterestedness, of course it is bound to be limited in all of us who have to work for our living. Few of us spend our lives working, whenever we do work, deliberately for the public good. As we work, indeed, we seldom think of the public good; but we take it for granted at the back of our minds either that the work of our trade or profession on the whole does the public some good or at least that it does it no harm. Self-interest, if nothing else, makes us do so. The milkman, for his own happiness, has to believe in the excellence of milk. The butcher is sincerely, if selfishly, convinced of the perils of abstinence from meat. Who could be more miserable than a butcher, converted to a passionate faith in vegetarianism, who was compelled for the sake of his wife and children to carry on his bloody business? The instinct of self-defence makes us believe in our jobs, whether we are butchers, poets or doctors.

Does this mean that a butcher cannot have a disinterested objection to vegetarianism? I do not think so. It is possible to have a genuine faith in the virtues of beef-eating without being a butcher, and a butcher in retirement hates nut-meat, when he has nothing to gain by his hatred, as heartily as when he was in business. Similarly, the retired doctor, freed from all need to consider the money-making aspects of his profession, is as warm in his denunciations of all the new cures which he regards as quackeries as the young physician engaged on his first job in a hospital. I have no doubt that as large a proportion of doctors as of barristers or business men love to

make money, but the love of money is a harmless incentive where it is controlled by common honesty. Personally, I like to see a surgeon making money so long as he does not perform unnecessary operations merely for the sake of making money. I imagine, however, that where unnecessary operations are performed most of them are due not to a determination to make money at all costs, but to a professional, and possibly exaggerated, faith in the benefits of surgery.

Doctors, brewers, and the rest of us, we are blinded as often by the sincerity of our faith in our profession or trade as by self-interest. Not blinded, perhaps, but at least kept in blinkers. There are few things more honest than prejudice, and most of us are prejudiced in favour of the lives we have chosen. Hence, it is less important to know whether a doctor or anyone else is disinterested than whether he is right. The terrible thing about some of the most disinterested people I have known is that their opinions have been as poisonous as their disinterestedness has been pure. Y. Y.

THE UNIVERSAL CURE

For each delicate problem's solution
I observe that mankind has recourse—
Through dictatorship, war, revolution—
To the use of irrelevant force.
If the balance of trade is precarious,
If the banks or the Governments crash,
All seek, though their methods are various,
For something to smash.

If the outlook is gloomy and sinister,
With bankruptcy looming ahead,
It is righted by shooting a Minister—
Or by spraying a city with lead;
And nobody doubts the utility,
In crises, of tear-gas, or pikes,
Or of seeking internal stability
By riots and strikes.

Some hope the return of prosperity
From taxi-cabs burned in the streets;
Some trust to the greater severity
Of "bombers," machine-guns and fleets;
But all men, it seems, are united
(See "Stop-press" for chapter and verse)
In believing that wrongs can be righted
By making them worse.

And shall *I* then refuse the deduction
From the conduct of human affairs
That an hour of mere aimless destruction
Is worth a whole week of repairs?
No! when curing my watch of its habit
Of gaining and losing by jerks,
I will stand no damned nonsense, but grab it
And stamp on the works!

MACFLECKNOE

PRISON LABOUR AND "HARD LABOUR"

There are still magistrates who sentence a man to imprisonment and add menacingly "with hard labour." Such would do well to read the Report of the Committee on the Employment of Prisoners. They will find that "Hard Labour" merely means a bed with no mattress for the first fortnight, and that one of the worst features of prison life is chronic under-employment.

The problem admits of no easy solution. One factor is the poor quality of prison labour. Apart from the fact that the prison population contains a high proportion of "the almost mentally deficient, the drunken, the feeble and the work-shy," nearly 11,000 of those committed each year spend only two consecutive weeks or less in prison. The short sentence prevents real prison reform and leaves the prison officers with the task of employing an "incompetent and changing crowd of workers." They cannot retain a good worker; they cannot dismiss a bad one. Hence labour conditions are fundamentally different from those of free industry. Prisons are expected to be training schools—but they cannot expel the incorrigible. They are expected to be centres of industry—but they cannot sack the idler. Under the existing system, which permits short sentences, recognises no mental abnormality short of insanity or certified mental defect and uses the prisons as a scrap heap, these conditions are permanent. At present they are aggravated by the universal shortage of demand which has thrown millions of free men out of work. Unemployment has cast its shadow over prison industry; the G.P.O., spurred to economy, makes the mail-bags last longer and the prisons' staple industry shrinks accordingly. The results are a reduction of the prison workshop day to 6½ and even 5 hours and the preposterous situation in which a prisoner "sits beside an idle machine sewing a mail bag by hand to make his work last longer." He has no incentive to effort in the form of wages and he knows that he is performing a daily act of kindness to the prison authorities if he does as little work as possible. Thus does he become "adept at wasting time unobtrusively." And there could be nothing more disastrous to character building than this pretence of "hard labour" by men many of whom are naturally slack, irresponsible and incapable of concentration and steady effort. The Committee took evidence from a number of prisoners who emphasised this truth. One writes: "the overcrowding of working parties tends to encourage habits of laziness and shirking which . . . are difficult to throw off and the worst possible equipment for a prisoner on discharge." Another says: "There is not a single trade at Wakefield that does more for a man than help him to 'kill time.' There is simply not the scope for anything more in the materials at hand."

The Committee has cleared the way for action by showing up the game of make-believe played in prison industry. Their chapter on "The Value of Prison Labour" reveals a method of accounting incredible outside Wonderland, and their conclusion is that no one knows the value of the prison labour. The official figures given each year are arrived at by adopting basic rates laid down in 1897 and arbitrarily increased by percentage additions made each year since 1921. Pure guesswork would have been as good, and the Committee (while admitting that their own data are inadequate), after fairly thorough costing and valuation of a number of articles made in prisons, concludes that the annual value of prison labour is more in the region of £82,500 than the official figure of £322,848.

Criticism could be multiplied; but mere lamentation leads nowhere. Ultimately the rationalisation of prison industry depends on an entire change in our attitude towards the law-breaker. When we really believe, as it is fashionable to profess, that the criminal is to a great extent the victim of social and economic evils which we as well as he have helped to create, we shall sweep away the whole theory and practice of "retributive justice" and approach the problem of the anti-social citizen from the standpoint of the doctor who examines his patient's condition, rather than that of the judge who sits on high and pronounces sentence in almost total ignorance of its probable effect upon the prisoner. When we are wiser in our dealings with law-breakers we shall have more individual treatment and more varieties of treatment, and prison life will be made more like life outside. Prison, as it is to-day, has no use for such qualities as the capacity for leadership or for self-sacrifice—generosity practised in prison is a crime, for it is subversive of discipline to give part of one's dinner to the man in the next cell. This unnatural repression of the basic instincts and of the emotions will have to cease. When all this is changed, prison labour will be changed

too. But pending what may seem to some to be the millennium, there are reforms which can be put through now, and here the Report on the Employment of Prisoners has valuable suggestions.

Briefly they suggest the following changes—the appointment of an Industrial Commissioner to reorganise and supervise prison and Borstal industries; the formulation of a definite industrial policy and the reorganisation and modernisation of prison workshops and equipment; the restoration of the 8-hour day of associated labour; the payment of a wage to prisoners who reach a minimum output of reasonable quality; the appointment of more and better qualified instructors; improved administrative machinery for seeking orders and for purchasing materials; the provision of more work on the land—land reclamation, agriculture and horticulture. For persons under 30 years with fairly long sentences the Committee urge that training in industry rather than production should be the primary concern.

Some of these things can be done at once. The Industrial Commissioner should be appointed without delay. He will not be able to create a demand for mailbags and ships' fenders and brushes and other prison products; nor can he make the prison population into first-grade free labour. But given the right man with both ability and enthusiasm, his appointment will at once give the prison workshop the pride of place which it must have, if the claim that the purpose of prison is to reform and educate is to be more than a mockery to the man inside and a pious platitude on the lips of those outside. He will be able to put the whole industrial organisation on a business footing and at least face the financial and economic facts of the situation—a first step towards grappling with these unpleasant realities. His existence will rouse Governors to take more interest in the industrial side of prison life, as the Committee urge that they should do.

The payment of wages to prisoners and the extension of the market for prison-made goods has aroused criticism. Why, it is asked, when "honest men" are out of work should we give more work and wages to rogues? One answer is that the criminal is not alone responsible for his crime. Often it is the burden of enforced idleness which has proved too heavy for his resistance and driven him to housebreaking and to prison. Modern psychology makes it impossible for us to accept the comfortable doctrine that crime is the result of "pure cussedness" on the part of the criminal. Prison is a measure of social injustice as well as of individual weakness or ill-will. Another answer is that if prison is used as a scrap heap for derelicts instead of as a training ground for citizenship, it will produce derelicts, not citizens, and for the community's sake it is imperative that prison life should be as natural as possible, that it should give scope for the exercise of energy, initiative, concentration, responsibility. Perhaps no reform is more likely to develop these qualities than a reorganised prison workshop or farm, where by good work done under the triple spur of self interest, family responsibility and the satisfaction of the creative impulse, a man may earn something towards the cost of his own keep, that of his wife and children, save something against the day of release and (last but not to be forgotten) spend something on cigarettes or sardines at the prison canteen. The wage schemes run experimentally at Wakefield and Nottingham, at first by means of funds collected by the Howard League and continued at Lowdham out of public funds, have shown how this reform may improve the spirit of the men and the quality and quantity of their output. Not only does the wage, however small, give an incentive to work, but the mere existence of the wage-earning group provides the prison authorities with a lever for the maintenance of discipline and industry, comparable in effectiveness only with the power to earn remission. The man who is systematically idle or insubordinate can be relegated to a non-earning group, and to the least interesting labouring jobs. Prison work becomes a job worth having when one can "get the sack." It is a change of the first importance.

In the long run the free community has everything to gain and nothing to lose from the rationalising and humanising of prison life and labour. For the public mind will not tolerate better treatment for the lawless than for the "lawful" man, and it follows therefore, as Prof. Hobhouse pointed out, that the standards of penal and prison administration tend to form the basic level for society, and that when these are raised all the higher levels rise with them. Deplorable as many workhouses still are, the taunt justly levelled at the worst that "casual wards are worse than prison" has helped to improve the casual wards. It is well to take hold of a thing at the bottom if you want to lift it.

CICELY M. CRAVEN

Correspondence

DICTATORSHIP

SIR,—Despite the title of this letter, I want to ask those who read it, until they have done reading it, to put the question of dictatorship out of their minds. When they have finished reading it, I want them to ask themselves whether the measures which it proposes can be fairly described as "dictatorship," or, on the initial assumption which I shall make, be reasonably objected to. That assumption is, simply, that a Government has been returned to power as the outcome of an election fought on the issue of Socialism as an immediate policy.

What will be the tasks confronting such a Government? There will be, first of all, a considerable number of things which it will be pledged to clean up—matters arising out of the existing system, and not involving in themselves any establishment of Socialism. For example, if the situation here envisaged arises after the next General Election (I am not saying that it will), the new Government will presumably be pledged, among other things, to restore the salary cuts made in 1931, to amend radically the treatment of the unemployed, to repeal the Trade Union Act of 1927 and substitute a more liberal measure, to raise the school-leaving age, to reinstate in some form the housing subsidies destroyed by Sir Hilton Young, and to enact legislation applying the Washington Eight Hours Convention. On the traditional principles of parliamentary government, that would constitute in itself, with the inevitable "frills" and incidentals, *plus* the preparation of the Budget and the care of foreign policy, an ample programme for the full five years' life of a normal Parliament. A Government that had done all that would, under ordinary conditions, go back to the electorate under no apprehension of being regarded as supine or deficient in legislative achievement.

An incoming Socialist Government would have to do all these things, and a good many more like them. Probably every reader will think for himself of some obvious omission in my list. On orthodox parliamentary principles, they will be fully enough to take up all the time available for legislation; for Parliaments have many things to do besides passing laws. But, suppose them all done—and they are all worth doing—will the Government have advanced one single inch towards the execution of its mandate to establish Socialism?

Even to make a workmanlike beginning with the construction of a Socialist system requires a second crop of legislation. There will doubtless be differences of opinion about what ought to be tackled first, and precisely how rapid the advance towards Socialism ought to be. Let us content ourselves with a selection of those measures which are most widely announced by Socialist leaders as among the necessary first steps towards the building up of a Socialist system, including nothing to which the Labour Party is not already committed beyond all possible doubt. We have (*a*) the socialisation of the Bank of England and of the Joint Stock Banks; (*b*) the socialisation of all agricultural land and of all minerals, or at the very least as a beginning the socialisation of the coal measures and the assumption of full powers of acquisition in respect of all land that may be needed for public purposes; (*c*) the supplementing of the existing Agricultural Marketing Acts by a further measure establishing Import Boards, so as to enable the marketing authorities to control both the home and the imported supply; (*d*) the socialisation of the coal mines, and their reorganisation under full public control; (*e*) the socialisation, or at least, controlled reorganisation of both the iron and steel industry and the cotton industry—both too urgent to wait; (*f*) the institution of public control over the new capital market, by means of a Board of National Investment or some similar body; (*g*) the

creation, at least in a rudimentary form, of some sort of machinery for the preparation and control of a co-ordinated Economic Plan.

This list, too, could easily be prolonged; but there is quite enough already to serve my purpose. For clearly these different measures cannot be left to be dealt with successively, over a period of years. The coal mines cannot wait till we have reorganised cotton and steel, or cotton and steel till we have dealt with the coal mines—and even so, I have said nothing of the railways or of road transport or of shipping, though all these will be waiting in the queue. Nor can the reorganisation of banking be left till industry has been dealt with, or the control of investment till both are out of the way. Least of all can the establishment of planning machinery be held over, and the separate services be left to develop without co-ordination till there is time to deal with it.

Nor is this all; for we have assumed so far that the incoming Government, having its majority in the House of Commons, finds no obstructions in its way. Actually, it will have to be prepared to overcome two sorts of impediment—political and economic. A Government which comes in with a mandate to set about establishing Socialism can hardly expect to be welcomed with the full "confidence" of the business world. I am not saying that it will be faced with a business panic; perhaps it will not. But it will certainly need to be armed with the power to deal with a panic, if such a thing does occur. That will mean more legislation —the assumption of emergency powers over currency and foreign exchange, and perhaps to secure the continued operation of necessary services, during the period immediately following its assumption of office. But in addition to these economic obstacles, it will be faced by the acute dislike of the House of Lords for its programme. I am not going to prophesy what the House of Lords will do; but I shall hardly be accused of rashness if I say that some part of the time and attention of the Socialist Government will have to be diverted from its constructive programme in order to deal with the House of Lords.

Foreign affairs may not involve much legislation; but they will —and should—take up a good deal of parliamentary time. Imperial affairs will involve legislation as well as attention; for there will be the situation in India to be handled, and probably the Irish Free State as well. Then a Socialist Budget will certainly not be less controversial than Budgets usually are; and there are likely to be a great many matters arising in connection with commercial treaties and agreements, the relations between the central government and the local authorities, and similar matters—to say nothing of the purely incidental questions which are always turning up in an urgent form that calls for legislative action. Let us leave it at that.

Now I ask any reader, no matter what his opinions are, whether there is the remotest possibility of carrying through one-half or one-quarter of a programme of this sort by the use of the parliamentary methods to which we have been accustomed hitherto. If the answer is that this is because the programme is far too ambitious, I ask whether any scaling of it down can make the thing possible, and yet satisfy the initial assumption that a real attempt is to be made to establish a Socialist system within a measurable time. The enactment of the whole of this programme would be only a small part of what is necessary to establish Socialism; but the enactment of even a quarter of it, within the life of a single Parliament, is plainly impossible by orthodox and traditional parliamentary methods.

It follows absolutely that, if we do mean to establish Socialism, we shall have at the outset to make drastic changes in parliamentary procedure—which, incidentally, will also take some parliamentary time. What, broadly, will these changes have to be?

Whether we like it or not, we shall have to give up the method of debating in Parliament the details of the measures which have to be carried through. There will have to be much fuller use of committees, and less going over again of the same ground when Bills are reported to the whole House. But this will not suffice. We shall have, also, to put far less detail into the Bills introduced into Parliament, and to find alternative methods of filling out the administrative consequences of the broad principles which will be enunciated by the Acts themselves.

I agree that it will not do, unless we are in a clearly revolutionary situation—and in this letter I am not discussing any such thing—simply to leave all the matters with which Parliament has no time to deal to the bureaucratic decision of Government departments. Inevitably, there will be an enlargement of Ministers' powers; for that is bound to happen when large changes are being introduced over a wide field. But we must provide means both of supporting the Ministers' authority and of exposing them to reasonable criticism if we are to secure respect for their actions. Accordingly, we shall have to supplement parliamentary control of Ministers with new forms of extra-parliamentary advice and criticism designed to meet the new needs. I think there will have to be, attached to each important department, a special Advisory Council so constituted as broadly to mirror the political complexion of Parliament, and also to give representation to the various groups and interests specially concerned in each department's work. I think Ministers will have to bring their draft orders and regulations made under the authority of Acts of Parliament before these advisory bodies, in most cases before they can become operative; and there will have to be some body, perhaps a committee of Parliament or of the Cabinet, to which differences between a Minister and his Council can be referred for settlement. Obviously, this needs much more working out, and the required structure would differ from one department to another. But I hope the broad principle is clear.

Have proposals of this sort anything unreasonable about them? If so, is there any alternative method whereby the establishment of Socialism by parliamentary methods can be reconciled with democracy? I know of none; and accordingly, I believe that those who oppose changes of this order in parliamentary method are, in effect, opposing the attempt to get to Socialism without violent revolution. It is natural that opponents of Socialism should take up this attitude; but can it logically be taken up by Socialists?

Finally, does anything that I have suggested in this article merit the name of dictatorship? If not, will members of the Labour Party be so good as to give over abetting the Conservative Head Office and the capitalist press by denouncing those who advocate them as "would-be dictators"? For, I have yet to learn that those leaders of the Party who are being so stigmatised have proposed anything more dictatorial than this.

MEMBER OF THE LABOUR PARTY

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

SIR,—It is surprising that there should be any real Labour criticism of your most excellent article on Sir Stafford Cripps. He is, as you rightly point out, rendering the Labour Party immense service at the present critical time, and therein lies the explanation of the press hostility towards him. After the happenings of the last decade it is vitally necessary that actual and potential Labour supporters should be assured that there exists in the Party leadership with the grit and determination to use to the full any power which may be accorded to it by the electorate. This fact makes Sir Stafford's declarations so timely and so welcome.

Naturally the Liberal press, including the *Manchester Guardian*, whose vision of the future is a Labour-Liberal coalition for social reform purposes, dislikes so uncompromising a spokesman, and joins forces with the Tory press, and with one or two of our own weaker brethren, in misrepresenting and abusing him. Let us hope that Sir Stafford will recognise these attacks for the testimonials they really are, and will consequently treat them as additional reasons for carrying on his good work of heartening and enthusing the Labour rank and file. ERNEST THURTLE

49 Lichfield Grove, Finchley, N.3.

SIR,—No better justification of your article on Sir Stafford Cripps could have been given than the letter from the Rev. Walter B. Graham in your last issue.

Mr. Graham apparently obtains his impressions of Sir Stafford from the press and naturally believes that Sir Stafford "loses us 20,000 votes . . . every time he opens his mouth." He ought to have said "every time he is reported to have opened his mouth." Those of us who heard Sir Stafford open his mouth without the help of the press, when he spoke over the wireless, discovered in two minutes that as a propagandist for converting people to Socialism he was head and shoulders above the average. He put new heart into Socialists and compelled the respect of non-Socialists. I had in my house at the time friends of Liberal persuasion, and far from driving them away from Socialism, I have seldom heard a speaker who, with such absence of compromise and vagueness won their respect and interest in the Socialist case. And one has only to hear him speak in person to know how misleading is Mr. Graham's charge that he is driving people away from Socialism. It is only when we see the "reports" of parts of his speeches in the press that we realise how cleverly the press can, when it chooses, discredit the leaders it dislikes.

As for Mr. Binns's letter on the *Manchester Guardian*, I have for years been a regular reader and admirer of the paper. But I have to confess that I share Mr. Binns's fears. I was having lunch with a friend some days ago who has done prominent work as a left-wing Liberal. He was reading the *Guardian's* leading article on Professor Tawney's letter that had appeared in the paper. "God!" he exclaimed, with sudden impatience, "If the *Guardian* isn't careful it is going to be as futile in the next crisis as it has been a bulwark in past crises." Coming from one who, even more than myself, has always sworn by the *Guardian*, the exclamation was, I think, significant.

We cannot be too grateful for the splendid integrity of the *Guardian* over 90 per cent. of its pages. There is nothing like it in English journalism. But when, over the remaining 10 per cent., it begins to lose grip—and that on the most vital issue of the century—then those who are its most sincere well-wishers have a duty to speak out.

B. HOYLE

SIR,—I entirely agree with your correspondent, the Rev. Walter Graham in his criticism of Sir S. Cripps, who takes for granted that as soon as he gets his majority in worker's votes he will at once be met by *all* the Lords and *all* the bankers violently opposing him, although he has the long-suffering masses behind him. He will then turn on his emergency stunt and wipe them out of existence. We don't behave like this in England. We are not in two camps—rich *versus* poor; ineradicable hatred between them. "Pistols for two and coffee for one."

It is more true to say that Socialism is fast leavening all classes like a fine tonic and a desire for universal brotherhood is growing daily.

I also was a Socialist forty years ago and called a crank with the first Fabians and with friends of William Morris and Karl Pearson, who was fond of quoting that phrase: "Let us take hands and work; for this day we are alive together."

Hurstpierpoint, Sussex. A. L. B. HARDCASTLE

SIR,—The Rev. W. B. Graham quotes the *Manchester Guardian* as proof that Sir Stafford Cripps is turning people away from Socialism. Which part of the *Guardian* would he have us believe? Did he observe, for instance, that the Special Correspondent, writing about the Lowestoft by-election on Feb. 12th, said: "The Labour candidate is getting *good* Parliamentary support. . . . Sir Stafford Cripps has *undoubtedly won votes for him*"? (Italics mine).

Not bad work for someone whom the *Guardian's* leader writer had written off as the Labour Party's "Biggest Liability"!

Victoria Park, H. BINNS
Manchester.

TOWN PLANNING IN PRACTICE

SIR,—The contributor of your article, "Town Planning in Practice," regrets the interminable time it takes to get a planning scheme prepared, approved, and put into effective operation. But does it really matter so much? As town-planning schemes go nowadays they make little or no difference. They merely encourage and officially bless the disorder and nastiness of modern development. Many of the most horrible messes in the country have been perpetrated under planning schemes. Anyone who hopes for much good result from planning as it is at present practised is either an incurable optimist or is just blissfully ignorant of what it all amounts to. "In the meantime the speculative builder may spread his monstrosities where he will," laments your contributor. And when the planning scheme is approved it won't make a ha'p'orth of difference.

Your contributor shows that one reason for the failure of present planning lies in the jerry-builders themselves getting on to the planning committees and using them for their own ends. A far larger reason lies in the fact that local authorities are not the people to do the planning at all. They are by nature not planners, but opportunists. They are too easily seduced by expedients such as the accumulation of rateable value, the undertaking of works for relief purposes or to obtain Government grants (as well as too open to private pressure and influence), ever to exercise properly the judicial control which is so large a part of planning. Further, they are themselves among the chief developing agents in their localities. They build housing schemes, construct roads, pollute rivers, pile up refuse dumps, etc., etc. Their own operations need outside planning as much as the operations of the jerry-builder. There is no hope of there being any effective planning until it comes under a National Planning Board with district Commissioners. But the greatest of all obstacles to planning is the multiplicity of landowners. You cannot impose planning on a million different interests, each fighting for all the profit it can get. There will probably not be any real town or country planning until the land is nationalised.

PLANNER

DIMITROV

SIR,—I enclose a cheque for £5 in the hope that you may be able to convey the amount to any trustworthy persons you know of, who are helping to secure the liberation of Dimitrov and Torgler. The amount is small in proportion to an enterprise that must be costly, but I am only a schoolmaster, overworked and underpaid. The fate of these men has moved me profoundly, and I congratulate you on keeping their memory alive with a section of the public that really matters. SCHOOLMASTER

10 Denzil Avenue, Southampton.

[We gratefully acknowledge the cheque which has been sent on to those engaged in work on behalf of the imprisoned men. The latest news is very disquieting. Though Torgler is detained in decent quarters, the three Bulgarians are now in underground cells. In spite of repeated promises by the Minister of the Interior no announcement has yet been made as to their future treatment.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE LOCH NESS MONSTER

SIR,—The Loch Ness Monster, it seems, has been described as a huge creature with a long neck and a small head. I would suggest that it is the same creature which I saw in the upper waters of the Tay when I was fishing there in 1930, and described by me on pages 183–184 of my book, *The Roving Angler*, published in the spring of 1933. I saw something very clearly and definitely; but perhaps only the head and the neck, though I was under the impression that I had seen a great part of the body. I have thus described what I saw: "Two hours afterwards a creature which looked exactly like a calf reared itself three-quarters out of the middle of the Tay, and then sank back with a light splash. . . . It had the head, neck and shoulders of a calf."

It looked to me like that—a creature with a small long head and a rather long neck broadening to what appeared to be the shoulders. It bore no resemblance to an otter or seal, for the head was another shape. The colour was brown. What I saw may very well have been the head and neck of a gigantic lizard-like creature rather than the head and neck and part body of a calf. There may be a family of water monsters in the Highlands of Scotland. On the other hand, my perfectly true story may have given rise to an invention. One has only to see a strange thing once, talk or write about it, and a lot of other people imagine afterwards that they also have seen the same sort of thing, brooding on it until they grow quite confident about it. HERBERT PALMER

St. Albans.

MR. KURT HAHN

SIR,—Mr. Kurt Hahn, co-founder with Prince Max of Baden of the Salem Schools and the Salem system of education, whose broadcast and lectures at the Institute of Education have recently aroused general interest among parents, teachers, etc., has agreed—in response to many requests for a practical demonstration of the results of the method in this country—to receive suitable pupils.

A school, for the time being for boys, is being established in a favourable quarter in Scotland. Those wishing for information, or who may be interested to support the movement, should communicate with Miss Stopford, 4 Ashley Place, London, S.W.1.

GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG

FOG

SIR,—It puzzles me why Londoners tolerate fog. It is comical to think of Cabinet Ministers and many other superior persons residing in London for many months during the winter season and putting up with this filthy nuisance, which could be so easily removed. All that is necessary is to form a London Fuel Board with autocratic powers similar to those of the Central Electricity Board. Of course, there is a snag. The slums could not afford

to pay for the alterations, and the rich would have to pay for the poor. I imagine many of them would sooner choke. It is possible in these days to provide a suitable household grate which will burn ordinary coke easily and brightly. The fire may be started by means of a gas-jet or by means of sticks and a suitable air-pump worked by hand or foot. After starting the fire it needs no further encouragement from easily combustible material.

55 Upleatham Road, W. ROGERS
Saltburn by the Sea.

PRONUNCIATION

SIR,—A native of the West of Scotland called at the Library of the Guildhall in the City of London and asked for *The Oban Times*. He was promptly handed *The Holborn Guardian*. My friend came away with enhanced respect for the resourceful Cockney!

DAVID C. LAMB,
66 Chalkwell Avenue, Commissioner.
Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

Miscellany

LONDON SHOWS

AT the moment, it is difficult to visit a show of English painting without thinking of the questions raised at Burlington House. Are English painters born illustrators? Are they all amateurs at heart? Are Gainsborough and Constable magnificent accidents? And, if not, why have they failed to establish firmly an English tradition of painting? It looks almost as though Messrs. Agnew had arranged their winter exhibition of water-colours with a view to keeping these questions alive.

Of this exhibition the general effect is surprisingly agreeable. There are two rooms: one devoted to contemporaries, the other to eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century water-colours. In the latter, two masters, Gainsborough and Girtin, are represented by two delightful little works apiece—nothing surprising about that; what is surprising, is to find such a tiresome portraitist as Downman letting himself go in Rome and Romeabouts and returning from the escapade with a portfolio of lively and interesting sketches. The explanation may probably be that, in the open air, with his eye on cheerful and inspiring scenes, Downman divested himself of that sense of awful responsibility which sits like nightmare on the chest of an A.R.A. in his London studio. Abroad, he felt free to give the sensitive amateur an airing. Peter de Wint's sketch of Dover Priory and the downs behind—obviously made in the open and left as it was—is as fresh as a painting by Sisley almost; yet we all know what a bore de Wint could be when he took his things home and worked them up. Towne was an amateur always, sometimes a most agreeable one. The moment he tries to be something more and to use colour professionally his sketches become as distasteful as those Turners of the middle period in which this exhibition abounds.

I could not help fancying—for a fancy it may have been—that Mr. Roger Fry, Mr. Porter and Mr. Meninsky, in the next room, had all experienced this sense of release. Certainly, I have rarely seen Mr. Fry in happier mood than in No. 15—*The Bridge*. As usual, Mr. du Plessis comes out extremely well. He is definitely one of the best of the younger men, an attractive and original colourist, and deserves to be better known. David Jones is to me a new name—as that of a painter, I mean—and I liked his delicately whimsical sketch a good deal.

In water-colour again, English artists are seen to advantage at the Redfern Gallery. One is always glad to look at the drawings of a good sculptor, if only for the fun of seeing whether, pencil or brush in hand, he continues to be a sculptor or seizes the opportunity of kicking up his heels. Will he, on paper, remain sculptural, voluminous and rotund, or will he flit off into airy flatness? Probably he will do both by turns. When he is making studies for sculpture, sculptural he must be, obviously; and that, no doubt, is what Dobson is doing here. His drawings—there are seven of them—mostly in sanguine with here and there a touch of wash, are all weighty and all good. The best, in my opinion, is No. 3, which happens to be in pencil: its slow, restrained movement, which is particularly satisfying, one feels to be essentially a movement in stone.

Presumably, Paul Nash—who has ten drawings in this exhibition—is always on the look out for a design in nature, ready to hand: he knows very well how to impose one of his own however. Here is an English artist who is thoroughly professional, who is not literary either. He seems to have made up his mind to decline the disastrous gambit proposed by the Pre-Raphaelites, and to have constituted himself a descendant of the admirable Norwich school. It is of Cotman rather than of Constable or Gainsborough that he occasionally makes one think. He is experimental, too, which is all to the good, and exhibits three or four cautious essays in *surréalisme*: No. 22 strikes me as a failure, No. 23 as a success.

An opportunity for airing one's theories is the main attraction of Mr. Glyn Philpot's exhibition at the Leicester Galleries. The case of Mr. Philpot is exemplary. From the moral point of view his career is a credit to humanity; from the artistic, a warning. Mr. Philpot, having achieved high success as a painter of fashionable, distinguished-looking and perfectly empty portraits, came by a call. He came to the conclusion, apparently, that what he was about was unworthy of a man who professed and called himself artist; that he would follow the light; and that the light was in Paris. To Paris he went, and from Paris he returned, with a batch of pictures superficially as unlike as possible those which he had painted in his unregenerate days, essentially indistinguishable. I mean there was no essence; they were still quite empty. The essence of visual art is the expression in line and colour of certain peculiar and indefinable experiences that come to artists through their eyes. Mr. Philpot expresses nothing. In his exalted moods—in the grand allegorical piece at the Leicester Galleries for instance—he uses lines and colours as symbols wherewith to make statements, not about visual experience, but about truth and love and humanity, life, death and the grand for ever; just as, in his unregenerate days, he used them as symbols wherewith to make statements about the nobility, loveableness, loyalty, high-breeding and good tailoring of his sitters. As art, one lot is as good as the other. Mr. Philpot's work is an extreme example of that unpainterlike conception of painting, latent always in England, scotched for a while by Gainsborough and Constable, and brought back to honour by Frith and Wilkie and the Pre-Raphaelites. It results, after infinite pains have been taken and weeks and months laboriously wasted, in the painter saying confusedly what any competent penny-a-liner could say clearly in a few hundred words.

Please note that I am not declaiming against the representative element in pictures; I am expressing my dislike of pictures that are not pictures at all, but bad literature, as often as not painful and fruitless endeavours to say in paint what has already been said in poetry. Burlington House is full of that sort of thing. How far I am from denying the possibility of some representational interest in pictures may be inferred from the confession that I spent half an hour at Knoedler's trying to give names to the figures in *Le Bal du Moulin Rouge*. This masterpiece is the *clou* of an exhibition of works by Toulouse-Lautrec, which has a rather scrappy air because, in a big room, some half dozen oil-paintings have had to be fitted in amongst fifteen or sixteen drawings: the exhibition is immensely worth a visit all the same. Lautrec's *Moulin Rouge* is, unless I mistake, only part of a larger picture which was chopped up by some abominable dealer; but as it stands it is a masterpiece. With the red stockings and amazingly drawn body of La Goulue for centre, the composition stretches outward through gradations and oppositions of marvellously subtle colour, and through drawing which, even at the least accentuated points, never ceases to be nervous and expressive. Mutilated though it be, the picture is a perfectly satisfying unity. Even more exquisite, perhaps, as painting, is Mr

Oliver's little picture, *Le Lit*, while a surprise is provided in the shape of *L'Anglais au Moulin Rouge*, a fine picture which comes to London from the provinces. To me, certainly, its existence—in England, too—was quite unknown, and I suspect it was to almost everyone else. CLIVE BELL

THREE PROSE POEMS

THE HOUSE

A house in the stagnant, beating rain: a grey house with yellow eyes, blinking against the night in hostile disillusion. Furtively concealed, the mats against the inner walls of the house go flap, flap like the bodies of rats launching themselves from a parapet down the slopes strewn with porcupine-bushes, seeking irresistibly the river, the trivial rounded curves of the river opaque to the moon.

LONDON AND CANDLE-LIGHT

My wooden giraffe, Longinus, stands spatially distinct in the candle-light. Behind him stretch dim vistas of forest and veldt—shadowy armies of beasts moving across bare spaces of confused light to drink in dark glimmering pools set with squat bushes and tangled weeds. In that crisp velvety atmosphere I hear the creatures shuffle and sniff and rub against one another as they pass out of the circle of vision.

Then a couple of taxis hurtle down the street again—purring, rocking with effective motion, subsiding to begin once more in a different key. London surrounds and engulfs me: London where all sensitive thoughts are dulled to a common tune, huge, penetrating, undetached. London's tide roaring between her lines of chimneys obliterates the keenness of the mind as the arc-lights of cars deluge the small circle of magic vision my candle creates for itself.

THE COCK

Up along the precipe of dawn tiptoes the cock, craning his neck to hurry with loud sounds the filtering, featureless light. Song and shout salute the dawn, the village breathes awake: O menacing day, the giddy cock is glad. J.

HYDE PARK

I READ *Within the Gates* with admiration; I saw it with deep disappointment. I will endeavour to discover how far this was due to the production and how far to faults which had escaped me before. On the stage at The Royalty *Within the Gates* fails. I thought it grand, moving, and a step in a dramatic development which at last might enable *poets* to write for the Theatre—when I read it. When I watched it, it seemed a grandiose mixture of blatant sentiment and heart-damping unreality. Moved? I was only moved by the muffled drums of the "Down and Outs." "The Bishop," "The Prostitute," "The Dreamer," left me coldly critical; the experiments in technique struck me as danger signals rather than as finger-posts. I fancy I detect some embarrassment in the comments of even the most laudatory of my colleagues. The lively and candid Mr. Agate, however, openly confessed to his. He called to his aid the distinction of Sainte Beuve between private criticism, when one speaks giving expression to one's personal preferences and aversions, and criticism written for the public when the critic first takes account of an author's reputation, and then allows (generously) for his intentions. Mr. Agate let us know that his own impressions of *Within the Gates* were violently unfavourable, but, speaking publicly, he admitted his personal reactions were not necessarily the last words on the play.

Yet there are only two dramatists writing to-day of original creative force: Eugene O'Neil and Sean O'Casey! In the Royalty Theatre I looked at my programme to be sure that such a play had indeed been written by Mr. O'Casey. True, intermittent wafts of poetry had reached me during the play and phrases moulded out of common speech into fine literature, and words, too, of pungent and necessary brutality. But all was drowned in what appeared a pretentious pessimism; in stuff one would expect from a playwright who had chosen as protagonists (inauspicious triad!) a Bishop, a Prostitute, and a Dreamer. How I had jumped on other dramatists in the past for using a "Dreamer" or his equivalent—a "Wanderer," or what not—figures, born of an earnest imagination more impressed than inspired by its theme, as mouthpieces for the expression of ultimate wisdom! How severe I had always been on Galsworthy's youthful idealists, hard pressed by a callous world, but gaily waving the garden-city banner of liberty and joy! How, then, in the name of candour and impartiality, could I now abstain from recording the hapless impression made on me by *this* young dreamer in flannel trousers? What heavy and artificially loaded irony to make "The Bishop" the father of "The Prostitute"! How cheap! Such was the invention of Sean O'Casey—the only living master, save one, of the phantasmic method of combining profound poetry and biting realism on the stage! The true successor of Ibsen and Synge. In my distress at having to write about the play I did what you would have done: I read it again. It appeared to me grand, moving, and a step towards a new dramatic development.

What was the explanation? Was the production an utter travesty? Or was *Within the Gates* unsuited to the stage? The answer to the first question is "To a large extent, yes." But I had seen what living actors had made of it (I am not going to criticise the acting, to praise this stroke of acting, or regret the failure of that), and I was now conscious of the colossal demands which Mr. O'Casey had unconsciously made upon his interpreters. In the first place the author calls up visions, scenes, which require the greatest elaboration and delicacy to impress the eye on the stage as they do the imagination of the reader. In a very real sense the "subject" of the play is a place, Hyde Park. The figures are only living parts, fragments, of a whole which (what an eye Mr. O'Casey has for the essential!) is a microcosm of human-life to-day. Hyde Park is a pool into which all the torrents of modern life flow: religion, politics, lust, play, scientific thought, despair, lonely meditation. There they eddy and clash. There, too, civilisation and nature mingle; prospects please and man is often vile. In the surface of that pool the poet has seen reflected the energies and lassitudes, follies, revolts and perplexities, desperations and compensations of modern life—and the terrible glorious inexplicability of the world. Often while crossing that love-parlour, debating hall, dormitory and university of the people, I have felt dimly, excruciatingly, myself what the poet-dramatist has conveyed (in print), often with the greatest skill in the use of contrasts, often with a sort of clumsy joyful force which, on paper, seems indistinguishable from success; the blue above the trees, clouds, song of birds, sparkling water; the music of the bands; the interminable wrangling and haranguing both of blind stupidity and half-educated cleverness; the indomitable persistence of man in thinking, wanting, striving; hidden instincts on the prowl; philanthropy too on the prowl; proselytising fanaticism; friendliness, sparrow-mindedness; the living-corpses of civilisation and of lovers glued together scattered about the green grass; the bright stable shifting surface of life, and the threat of an under-tow which may drag us away—all these things found place in the pages of this astounding drama. The halting steady dead-march of the defeated is heard again and again, and at last we even *see* the muddy edge of that drooping viscous human-flood which may yet obliterate civilisation. But all these things do not find proportioned or even adequate expression upon the stage. No, not upon the stage.

Consider for a moment what it required in lavish expense, in rehearsals, in enthusiastic appreciation of the play's drift, in order to represent so much as this upon the stage. The Park must be seen in spring, summer, autumn, winter—

and changing too with the moods of men. To produce this play Mr. Macdermott ought to have had thousands of pounds at his disposal, expert singers, strong choruses, expert dancers —in fact the resources of the Gaiety Theatre.

And that reminds me, my colleagues have introduced the words " Strindberg," " *Spook Sonata*," in their endeavour to indicate the novel technique of Mr. O'Casey's play. I believe they have looked too far afield. What is peculiar about it is that he has endeavoured to use the technique of *musical comedy* to express philosophic tragedy. More than two critics have referred to the Gardener as coming straight out of musical comedy—with a smile. That is perfectly true. But The Bishop, The Prostitute, The Dreamer, The Old Woman, the recurring Park Keepers and Orators are technically like the figures who appear and disappear among the whirling choruses of the Gaiety stage. I said I would attempt to apportion, if I could, between author and producer, the degree of responsibility for the failure on the stage of *Within the Gates*.

Mr. O'Casey has taken for granted that when he imagines in his mind, for example, the desperate joy-dance of the Prostitute, her repeated faintings and flaggings, her maenad recoveries and realistic pertnesses, that all these things are possible to the same interpreter and in quick succession. He has not watched enough to see the lowering effect on the stage of repeated situations. He has not foreseen the emotional confusion in the audience produced by having to regard the Bishop at one moment as a comic figure crudely humiliated by giggling nursery maids, and kissing babies, and the next as a hieratic figure of retributive " mercy " ; that there must be diminished effect in repeatedly introducing his sister, that stock elderly character in musical comedy, who is perpetually shocked and tries to save the dignity of her man from ludicrously undignified predicaments. He has fancied that a young man in flannels with a thoughtful expression can convey the impression of a sort of Loki, or fire-god of desire and faith in defiance. He has made a psychological error in typifying the universal power of sex heavily by making the Bishop the begetter of the Prostitute. The results of those defects lie at his door. But his producer has made a far more pervasive mistake in neglecting the definite stage instructions that the principal figures should suggest that they are symbols as well as individuals. The Bishop was realistic ; he carried no crook, no fantastic red cross with the white body of Christ upon it swung from his neck ; no queer hat suggesting the mitre was on his head. The Scarlet Woman, who is the emblem of part of the life of Hyde Park itself, and the architype of the slightly more realistic prostitute, was omitted altogether, while the Prostitute to the eye was just an ordinary little woman. The realistic note, in spite of the play being to a large extent sardonic *opera*, was persistently reinforced, and consequently emphasised such blunders in theatrical psychology as the poet's work contained. It brought them to the surface instead of merging them in the pageantry, music and phantasmic energy of the whole creation. In a way I am sorry that this play has been performed. For another reason I am glad. Mr. O'Casey is a man who cares so little for the effect on the public of his work and so entirely for that work itself that he is in danger of ignoring problems of communication. Having seen his play, he will have seen something important to him as an artist.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

TWO QUEENS, FOUR KINGS, AND AN ACE

Catherine the Great. *Leicester Square.*
Queen Christina. *Empire.*
Duck Soup. *Carlton.*
Lullabyland. *Carlton.*

The sudden rush of highbrowism into the film columns this week is really rather disconcerting. It is quite true that if we look up the history books we shall learn that Catherine was built square and solid, like the side of a small house, and

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governed by ambition probably even to the extent of being party to the murder of Peter. We shall also learn that Christina was not only ugly but uncouth. But what on earth have the characters of the two dead ladies got to do with the films now before us? How can it justify the complaint that their incarnation by the tiny, childlike Bergner and the sleek and slinky Garbo are acts of bad casting? It is curious that the type that vents this criticism is precisely the sort that would most be stunned by the suggestion that Macbeth was the worse play for giving an entire picture of domestic life at the Scottish Court, or Hamlet false because that particular Prince of Denmark happened historically to be really an extrovert. Czinner and Mamoulian have little in common with Shakespeare, but that little is the fact that they were all three making romances, not text-books for schools.

Qua romance, the first is much the better of the two. It is also more gripping than *Henry VIII*. Partly this is because Czinner has an inside and feelings, while Korda is cold-blooded enough to be obsessed by his jokes, in this case the fact that English patriots always like their kings to be rakes. Partly it is because Laughton only filled out the static joke, with his immense gusto, while Bergner subtly solves the dynamic task of rendering the transformation of a naive and devoted girl to a hard and imperious woman. The immersion of all her motives in a saccharine bath of goody-goody Hans Andersenishness and self-sacrifice "for the sake of the people" in no way weakens the drama. Drama does not consist solely in the Grand Guignol horrors of madness, corruption and debauchery proper to the real tale. Flora Robson discovers herself as the English Edna May Oliver, and Allan Jeayes deserves a good mark. The palace sets are exceedingly decorative and no one who has ever been in a Paris night club will fail to recognise the authentic Russian atmosphere of the Grand Duke's hunting lodge.

Queen Christina is too conscious that she is a Queen. She spoils her love-story by long and superficial dissertations on philosophy and politics, fitted to the popular ethics of to-day, and by not only spouting in language as ornate as that at a vicarage pageant-play, but affecting even the most ordinary American actors who come near her in the same way. Who could be ungrateful, though, for a film with such exquisite close-ups, and the lovely silent sequences of Garbo striding along corridors or riding through the snow? In all her career, not excepting her Swedish films, she has never looked more beautiful. And she delivers stump speeches with a fire and vigour that dissolve mobs like tear-gas. But, after all, that is exactly what it is.

Thirty-seven per cent. of the film-goers who returned a recent questionnaire thought it worth while to say they didn't like the Marx Brothers. Yet they are talkie grand-daddies; their *Cocoanuts* was contemporary with Al Jolson, but they survive much more effectively than he. Like the spinach joke, they either seem funny or they don't. I had never seen them before *Duck Soup* and am surprised to find their methods precisely the same as those of the soi-disant film surrealistes, using the *non sequitur* to make you laugh instead of, as Bunuel does equally deliberately, to make you feel uncomfortable. I do not think them funny, and resent having laughed all the time.

Lastly *Lullabyland*. See it instantly. The new things it does with colour are as far in advance of any Disney to date as the Silly Symphonies in general were in front of the black-and-white Mickeys.

IVOR MONTAGU

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Prodigal Son

The Ballets Jooss at the Gaiety added this week to their programme a new production based on the Biblical story of *The Prodigal Son*, with music by Fritz A. Cohen and choreography by Kurt Jooss. It lacked, however, a purposeful conception. The Prodigal Son executes similar series of movements whether he is about to leave his parental home or is wandering in the wilderness. The mother, on seeing her exhausted son return, suddenly executes a series of silent side-steps like a tap dancer. The crowd was constantly on the move. They had no repose unless they were actually lying down on the stage.

A choreographer can, of course, be justified in resorting to any number of styles and periods of dancing, music and décor. But there must be an artistic conception which fuses them into a resulting unity. Here there was a profusion of styles but no artistic inevitability. The only unity is the story of *The Prodigal Son*, and that is not enough.

Evening of Jewish Dramatic Art

Sonia Alomis and Alexander Asro, formerly chief members of the well-known Vilna Troupe, gave a recital on Tuesday at the Scala Theatre. They are gifted artists, and it speaks well for their art that their performance was moving to those members of the audience to whom the language was unintelligible. They appeared together only in the last of the three pieces, but by reason of their restraint of gesture and wide range of intonation their acted monologues were often deeply moving. In a dramatised version of a story by the Yiddish writer, J. L. Perez, about a mad beggar who soliloquizes on the problems of the universe in an attempt to drown his hunger and loneliness, Asro achieved a rare intensity of feeling, and an apparent oblivion of the audience which was very telling. In the first piece, concerning the wanderings of the soul of a Jew between death and its acceptance in Paradise, the language was more essential, but it showed admirably the powers of Sonia Alomis in her use of gesture and voice. The committee sponsoring the production promises a further performance.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, February 16th—
"The Queen Who Kept Her Head," Kingsway Theatre.
B.B.C. Chamber Concert, Broadcasting House, 8.30.
"Jephtha," Guildhall, Cambridge.

SATURDAY, February 17th—
Concert of recently published works of Elgar and Bliss, Victoria and Albert Museum, 3.
"The Big House," Playhouse.

SUNDAY, February 18th—
Prof. J. C. Flugel on "International Language Psychologically Considered," Conway Hall, 11.
Austrian Outrage Protest Meeting. Speaker: Ben. Tillett, Willoughby Hall, 1 Willoughby Road, Hampstead, 7.30.
William Mellor on "The Class Struggle," Transport Hall, Smith Square, 7.45.
"The White Guard," Cambridge Theatre.

MONDAY, February 19th—
British Industries Fair, London and Birmingham.
London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

TUESDAY, February 20th—
A. Ruth Fry on "Should Pacifists Work for an International Police Force," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
G. P. Gooch on "The Outlook in Europe," Kensington Town Hall, 5.30.
Dr. E. Graham Howe on "Law and the Family," Friends House, Euston Road, 5.45.
S. K. Ratcliffe on "The Roosevelt Dictatorship," Conway Hall, 7.
Sir Charles Petrie on "Fascism," Morley College, 8.
"Yours Sincerely," Daly's Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, February 21st—
Lecture by Mrs. St. Loe Strachey, in aid of the London Child Guidance Clinic, on "The Gay Victorians," Thorpe Lodge, 19 Airlie Gardens, Campden Hill, 5.30. Tickets (10s. 6d.), obtainable from the Secretary.
Ernst Toller on "The German Theatre," Conway Hall, 8.30.

THURSDAY, February 22nd—
A. F. Meyendorff on "The Russian Revolution," Bedford College, 5.15.
Sir John Marriott on "Problems of the Modern State," Imperial Institute Road, South Kensington, 5.30.
R. S. Lambert on "Broadcasting," Y.W.C.A. Central Club, Gt. Russell Street, 7.30.
Miss A. Susan Lawrence on "America and the National Recovery Act," Livingstone Hall, Broadway, S.W.1, 8.
Claud Mullins on "Police Court and the Criminal," Morley College, 8.
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
Dr. Sybille Yates on "Marriage Difficulties as they affect the Children," 36 Gloucester Place, 8.30.
"Here's How," Saville Theatre.

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BY R. D. CHARQUES & A. H. EWEN

Soberly written though this book is & studiously unsensational in its manner, it will be at once recognised as a really terrifying exposition of the part played by dominant economic interests & influences in shaping the policy—particularly the foreign policy—of national governments during the past fifteen years.

The book was published last month, & it foretells, with extraordinary accuracy, the existing political situation in France & the developing situation in Japan.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

"IT is better to travel hopefully than to arrive." This trite reflection might well have occurred to Mr. A. J. A. Symons as he neared the end of the quest which he has so admirably chronicled in *The Quest for Corvo* (Cassell, 12*s.* 6*d.*). At the outset, let it be said that it is a fascinating book which is interesting throughout. On the title-page, Mr. Symons calls it "an experiment in biography"—every good book is a bit of an experiment—but this is a most strikingly successful one, and Mr. Symons, as he has shown before, can write very well. The weakness of the book, as well as a part of its fascination, lies in its subject Frederick Rolfe, the self-styled "Baron Corvo." Mr. Symons was bound, of course, to arrive and, having completely discovered Frederick Rolfe, it is plain that he doesn't quite know what sort of face to put on the disagreeable *trouvaille*. That is the dilemma which faces people who are hypnotised by imposters, since a fraud is only interesting if he is genuine somewhere. Mr. Symons has devoted years of his life, and infinite patience, not to speak of money, to the quest. Now, having found Rolfe, it is impossible for him to doubt that his hero was worth finding. Thus, he has long ago persuaded himself, and would now persuade us, that Rolfe is, if not a great, at least an interesting and important writer and that as a character, he was an unlucky man who struggled bravely against misfortunes. And Mr. Symons has such a warm heart, such a wondrous kindness for Rolfe, that he is likely to make many people grudgingly admit there is a lot to be said for the fellow after all. The plainest speaking is, therefore, required. In the first place, Rolfe is, in my opinion, a wretchedly poor writer whose style only occasionally rises to a certain vituperative grace.

> "Eminency, I am not one of your low Erse or pseudo-Gaels, flippertigibbets of frothy, flighty, fervour, whom you can blow hither and thither with a sixpence for a fan. Thank the Lord I'm English, born under Cancer, tenacious, slow and sure. Naturally I persist." Cardinalitial eyebrows re-ascended.

In spite of not being a pseudo-Gael, he is here obviously own brother to Mrs. Amanda Ros, and he frequently reveals himself as a Mrs. Ros imitating Beardsley and Wilde.

* * *

Here is another sentence from *Hadrian The Seventh*.

> Then he caused his guests to become seated. The atmosphere seemed to him laden with the invigorating aroma of possibilities.

Le style c'est l'homme. Rolfe could not have written worse had he been a successful politician. He has, of course, claims as an eccentric writer, coining and using words no one else has ever needed and attributing odd values to ordinary words.

> Between the washstand and the fire was the chair whereon Flavio slumbered (if one may use so indelicate a word of so delicate a cat).

But style, of course, is not everything. Let us consider his matter. *Hadrian The Seventh* is the story of a day-dream. The hero Rose is Rolfe himself, an unsuccessful candidate for the Roman Catholic priesthood, brooding over his wrongs—injuries which as Mr. Symons shows us, Rolfe himself had suffered. To him a Cardinal and a Bishop repair to make restitution. They present a written apology and a cheque for ten thousand pounds and carry him off to Rome where he is elected Pope. The great moment of the book for the author is when He can suddenly begin to spell Himself with a capital H. What a triumph over His enemies! As one reads on through this day-dream novel of the spoiled priest, the pitiful littleness of the author becomes at once harrowing and terrifying. How can a human being have had such a shrimp's soul as to brood and to go on brooding, year after year, and decade after decade over the mistakes and misadventures which befell him at a Scot's College in Rome? He is terrifying. One of his companions at the Scot's College, describes him as follows:

> There was a sort of ruthless selfishness in him which led him to exploit others, quite regardless of their interest, or feelings, or advantage. . . . There was little or no warmth or affectionateness in him. . . . He was a sort of sub-species. . . . He must have been very tough and elastic. . . . Was there an element of greatness in him to account for this? Or was it perhaps something more analogous to that appalling saying of Parolles: "If my heart were great 'twould burst at this. Simply the thing I am shall make me live."

"Somebody must pay for this," was the agreeable thought which seemed to haunt him. And, of course, it was literally true. Somebody had to support Rolfe for he hardly ever did any useful work and hardly ever earned any money. Unfortunately for them, they usually had to pay in other ways as well. Rolfe was a parasite who did not forgive his host when he had drained him dry, and whose only interest in other people seems to have been to learn their secrets, so that he could make them pay by suffering as well as in cash. He was a human limpet whom it was almost impossible to dislodge. There is an excellent, unfriendly, account of him in the *Aberdeen Free Press*, describing how his landlord, who had taken endless trouble with him, cooking special vegetarian dishes for him, realising there was no hope of ever being paid, had to have him carried out in his pyjamas clinging to the bed. On such occasions, Mr. Symons' sympathy is all for Rolfe. He spares no thought for the wagtails who fed this cuckoo.

* * *

To pose as a baron, as a God-child of the Kaiser, to say one springs from a noble Italian family are innocent foibles, but Rolfe's faults were darker and more devastating. I am not, of course, referring to his paederasty; what I mean is his entire absence of the power of self-criticism or generous self-condemnation. All his life long, nothing was ever his fault. If he had missed a train, you may be sure it would have been the work of his enemies. "Somebody must suffer for this," he would murmur as he sat down to write a furious epistle to the station-master. Rolfe's character is, indeed, a very familiar one, for similarly warped psychologies have been portrayed once and for all by Dostoevsky. The soliloquies in *Hadrian The Seventh* recall most strikingly some passages in *Notes from Underground*, which describe "the antithesis of the normal man," a type which Dostoevsky says in a footnote, positively must exist . . . and which in a long wonderful passage he compares to a mouse.

> In its nasty, stinking, underground home our insulted, crushed and ridiculed mouse promptly becomes absorbed in cold, malignant and, above all, everlasting spite. For forty years together it will remember its injury down to the smallest, most ignominious details, and every time it will add, of itself, details still more ignominious, spitefully teasing and tormenting itself with its own imagination.

But, whereas Dostoevsky's understanding is so complete and his love so all-embracing that he makes his reader identify himself with the hero of *Notes from Underground*, Mr. Symons can never make anyone identify themselves with Rolfe. The secret of his having made *The Quest for Corvo* such a good book, does not lie in his attitude to Rolfe. It is, indeed, difficult to say what his attitude really is. Thus, he will describe in detail Rolfe's really shocking ingratitude and abominable persecution of Fr. Beauclerk, and a little later will speak of Rolfe as "being cheated of his due," so that one begins to wonder whether such delusions are infectious. Rolfe's knowledge of Greek has been compared to Shakespeare's, but Mr. Symons must liken Rolfe's use of the Greek Dictionary to Poe's love of correcting translations from the German, a language he did not know, and adds: "Both possessed that true feeling for literature beside which mere learning is as an unlit lamp." Such silliness does not affect the merits of *The Quest for Corvo*, which reside in its being the story of how the author first came to be interested, of how he sought and pieced together the scraps of information which came into his hands. It is full of admirably living descriptions: such as that of his co-adjutor, Mr. Maundy Gregory, living in an atmosphere of almost fabulous fairy-gold, or of his antithesis, in fortune and in figure, the even queerer Mr. Christopher Millard. Thus, *The Quest for Corvo* is a very good book and, considering the author's infatuation, a very honest one.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

Bloody Mary's. By GEOFFREY DENNIS. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
The Fault of Angels. By PAUL HORGAN. *Harpers.* 7s. 6d.
Fire Brigade. By RAYMOND OTIS. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
Gentlemen I Address You Privately. By KAY BOYLE. *Faber.* 8s. 6d.
The Brass Knocker. By EDWARD RATHBONE. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.

It is always dangerous to assume that a book is autobiographical. Plainly, there are very few novels from which the autobiographical element is wholly lacking; but the reviewer who observes of a story that it seems to be founded upon experience—by which, of course, he does not mean necessarily the author's own experience—in an attempt to distinguish it from novels on which imagination or fantasy have left a conspicuous mark, runs the risk of forgetting that the hero murders his mother or goes to prison during the last episode, and is apt to incur the wrath of the outraged novelist. Such was my fate not long ago. After reading Mr. Geoffrey Dennis's new novel, *Bloody Mary's*, an account of life as lived by a rather sensitive and bookish little boy at a large provincial grammar-school somewhere in the north of England, I am emboldened to make the same, possibly rash but, in this instance (I cannot help suspecting), perfectly well-founded observation. I do not mean that I identify Mr. Dennis with his protagonist, "Sneak," otherwise Abel, Carey—who, in spite of his nickname, was a nice, normal, high-principled and, at moments, courageous child; I mean that Queen Mary's strikes me, not as an amalgam of half a dozen schools, with which the author may have come into direct or vicarious contact, not as a generalised picture of School, or as an imaginative reconstruction of school-life as in certain circumstances it might develop, but as a real school, one and indivisible, inhabited by real boys—all the more real for being, most of them, excessively nasty. Mr. Dennis spares us nothing of their essential horridness; here is a description of that peculiar and oppressive tribal society which tends to spring up among a horde of growing children and adolescents. Abel Carey was a "train-boy" and, when he first joined his companions, was obliged to choose between a number of gangs each ruled by a different gang-leader. There was "Ely's crew," and by them Abel Carey was submitted to a painful and ignominious process of initiation, was beaten, kicked, "knuckled," and frequently stuffed under the seat or hoisted up into the luggage-rack. "The Dirties," a group of juvenile libertines who travelled alone in a separate carriage, treated poor Abel even worse; while "Shaw's crew" cold-shouldered and despised him. . . . But school was not altogether a place of torment; the head master, Dr. Paulus Pengelly, a deep-voiced, big-bearded, ferocious giant, who flogged his little charges with weapons that ranged from an ordinary cane to a thick black-painted, "knobbly" walking-stick, is represented as a not entirely unlikeable figure and, in the end, when he is faced by disaster, as almost tragic. So surprising is the resilience of early youth, that Abel Carey looked back with regret to his vanished reign.

Unlike many school-stories, Mr. Geoffrey Dennis's novel is written neither from a sentimental nor from a recriminatory point of view. Bloody Mary's was not perhaps a school to which one would have felt tempted to send one's own children; but since English parents have made up their minds that it does their offspring good—"helps to knock off the corners, don't you know"; though the average public-school boy loses more than his "corners"—to enter a society of which the constitution can only be compared to that of the most backward and bigoted aboriginal tribe, no doubt it served its purpose in the social scheme. At all events, Mr. Dennis has enjoyed writing about it; his book is a little too long, certain of the less dramatic episodes might have been cut down with great advantage, and here and there the novelist slips into a tone of somewhat school-masterly facetiousness. It is annoying, for instance, to read during the account of a snowball-fight that the defenders had "cannonballs such as we wotted not of . . . and a great stock thereof," against which "naught could prevail." This ponderous and inflated use of archaisms is painfully reminiscent of scholastic humour.

A reader must overlook this tendency and should also be prepared to forgive various rather unpleasant typographical devices, such as Mr. Dennis's habit of inserting an exclamation or question mark, between brackets, for the sake of additional emphasis. *The Fault of Angels* will tax his patience more severely. Mr.

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Paul Horgan, who won the Harper Prize Novel Contest last year, Sinclair Lewis and Dorothy Canfield being two of the three judges, has produced a smooth, cleverly written and neatly constructed piece of work—a satirical comedy, only marred by quite the most idiotic and unconvincing heroine who was ever contrived to damp a reviewer's spirits. Nina Arenkoff was an exiled Russian; she had big eyes and, when her tears fell, which they did very often—for Nina was a scion of "Holy Russia" and fond of weeping over the sorrows and sins of the world—neither her eyelids nor her nose ever turned red. She wept, we are told, "with the greatest dignity. . . . When her food came her tears streamed on, and she ate with sweet little movements . . . her jaws moving ruefully, now in eating, now in dolorous comment. John never grew impatient with her." But then, of course, John was already deep in love, and a sense of the ridiculous is seldom included among a romantic lover's equipment. All the same, he might have taught her to speak English; from one end of the book to the other, Nina's use of the English language—represented by an extremely complicated phonetic system—shows no sign of improving; indeed, it becomes more and more "adorably" and devastatingly infantile. The story itself is concerned with Nina's vain attempts to proselytise the inhabitants of an American manufacturing town, where her husband conducts a subsidised orchestra; and to these attempts Nina's baby-language lends a comic and pathetic spice. Take, for example, Mr. Horgan's anecdote of how she burst into a friend's bedroom, bent on nipping in the bud a casual love affair:

> "I love Lydia, I love you, and I love . . " he began.
>
> "No, no, no," said Nina rapidly. "Was different, was different from 'l'amour.' Was so sweet to think you were in love wiz each ozzer. But is different. You have affection, is all?"
>
> "Yes, that is all," said Lydia, drawing her dressing-gown up on her bosom and shrugging her shoulders.
>
> "Zen, Jon," said Nina, gravely, "must go to your room and sleep wizout lady."

This quotation may do an injustice to the story, which—Nina apart—is shrewd and competent; but it helps to illustrate the strain of mawkish sentimentality that runs through a well-written and amusing book.

Fire Brigade is also concerned with provincial America. Mr. Raymond Otis is a more discreet and a considerably less fluent and exuberant writer than Mr. Paul Horgan, but his story is looser in method and more haphazard in execution. The fire brigade, to whom we are introduced, were a group of amateurs who—apparently for the sheer fun of the thing—acted as fire-fighters in a small New-Mexican town. The brigade included firemen of every sort—among others, Jim Mosely and Lorenzo, the Americanised Spaniard, who had made successful love to Jim Mosely's wife. This triangular situation is tenderly handled; unfortunately, there is no valid connecting link between the activities of the fire brigade, which are described in some detail, and the pattern made by Lorenzo, Jim and Claire. Still, the story is honest and not unreadable, though written in a somewhat arid and colourless prose.

Of Miss Boyle's prose, nobody could complain that it was flat or monotonous. Miss Boyle is a perceptive and careful writer; but the acuteness of her observation has not yet been absorbed by the prose-mannerism in which it is expressed and continues to stand out from the flow of her style. Sharp-edged splinters of cleverness distract the mind. Of an old man, we learn that "liver-spots, like little barks, were setting sail over his glassy skin," and that "his bloody eyes were as gentle as asters in his sagging face." When Miss Boyle describes a goat on a cliff-top, "sneezing in the short herbs and wagging her tufted chin," one is so conscious of the novelist's intention—which, I imagine, is to write vividly yet always objectively, that one finds it hard to follow the thread of her narrative. The characters whom she depicts are violent and odd; and I do not think that I can better the concise and graceful *compte rendu* of an American critic, which has been reprinted on the dust-cover, to the effect that "this novel is a story of three Lesbians, two homosexuals, the keeper of a brothel, a fanatic, a sadistic egotist, and one fine woman, who is seduced. . . ."

Oddity and violence are also radiated by *The Brass Knocker*, which, though fashioned after the likeness of a cherubic head, decorated the primrose-painted door of an exceedingly improbable *maison de joie* in a yet more improbable English market-town. Mr. Rathbone takes us back to the Powys Wonderland, to the realms of Rustick Romance, where wicked farmers and schoolteachers act the parts of baleful noblemen and avenging spirits in the Gothick extravaganzas of Mrs. Radcliffe. But Mr. Rathbone's method is decidedly original; *The Brass Knocker* is a kind of morality in which the drama of good and evil is played out among squalid and shameful surroundings. The doctrine that inspires it is unorthodox. Why should God, the author inquires, be more intimately involved in the good than in the bad actions of His creatures? If He is omnipresent, must not His divine energies be discernible among the wicked as well as among the pure of heart? . . . In its earlier stages, the narrative pace is deliberate and ponderous; but it livens up as it approaches the centre of its theme. Mr. Rathbone has a gift of visual imagery—a trick of enabling the reader to see through his eyes, of transferring a sharp and accurate impression—rarely met with in the work of modern novelists.

PETER QUENNELL

PLAYTIME

Caliban's Problems Book. By HUBERT PHILLIPS, S. T. SHOVELTON and G. STRUAN MARSHALL. *De La Rue.* 6s.

It is possible to put forward a very plausible case for puzzles and problems to be considered as a form of art. There is a great deal of aesthetic pleasure to be obtained from intellectual problems, and the pleasure is heightened by the artistic presentation of the material. Among the criteria of a good problem in chess are that it shall conform strictly to the rules of the game; that the effect shall be obtained with the utmost economy of material; and that there shall be as much variety, difficulty and unexpectedness in the solution as possible. It is also essential that there shall be but one way of solving the problem. Caliban's problems, which are well known to readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, are of many different kinds, and they cannot all be judged by the same standards. In the cryptogrammatic type of puzzle, for instance, we do not always know what are to be the rules of the game. To some people this is a blemish—to others a source of added excitement; as with all branches of aesthetics, individual opinions will differ as to which style gives the most pleasure. On the whole, however, Caliban's problems are very fair and sound. To construct a really good problem is often much more difficult than to solve it often much labour is expended in ensuring that there is one and only one answer (see Problem 56).

Just as chess problems cannot be solved by those unacquainted with the game, so Caliban's problems, in the majority of cases, pre-suppose a certain facility with logical and mathematical reasoning. They differ from problems which one might find in an algebra examination paper in that they often contain elements of common-sense reasoning which have to be combined with the mathematical result. Also they are intended for amusement rather than for instruction. A good example of the peculiar character of these puzzles is shown in the solution of Problem 5. Here it is required to find the ages of some children, and the data from which these ages have to be inferred are arithmetical. There are, however, a number of different solutions which will satisfy these data only one of them is admissible, on the grounds that the ages it gives fit in with a common-sense estimate.

From this intermediate type, the problems range, on either hand, to those which are purely arithmetical and to those which are entirely common sense. The detection of crime is a matter which lends itself well to the purely common-sense type of problem, and *Murder on the Underground* is a neat example of how this can be done though, to some extent, the surprising nature of the solution is due to a trick. A fictitious railway time-table is provided and it is only when we grasp that the train waits *two* minutes at each underground station that the mystery is resolved.

It does not necessarily follow that problems of the purely arithmetical type are uninteresting. Problem 19 is quite easy, and so ingenious that it merits reproduction here.

GIN AND BITTERS

A charabanc party visited a roadside pub. The conductor saw the landlord and made a private arrangement under which he was to get 5 per cent. commission—to be taken in drinks—on all refreshments consumed by passengers or by himself. Bitter was 8½*d.* a pint, mild ale 8*d.* a pint, and a small gin cost 7*d.* "Dog's nose" consists of a pint of bitter to which a small gin has been added.

Each of the passengers had a drink of the same value, and the conductor had half a dog's nose. As soon as all these drinks had been paid for the landlord drew a half of mild ale and handed it to the conductor with a wink.

How many passengers were there on the charabanc?

Sometimes one of the consequences of insistence on economy in the construction of puzzles is the aesthetic effect of making

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solution appear impossible. This technique is used to great advantage by Caliban. It is difficult to believe, for instance, on first reading Problem 6, *Mixed Doubles*, that it is possible to discover a unique solution. From this point of view also, one of the most charming is *The Crossword Prosecution*, contributed by F. L. Snow. This problem is most artistic in its presentation: the facts are given in so economical a manner that it seems surprising that the exact number of entrants for the crossword competition can be inferred.

There is an appendix in which useful mathematical facts are recorded to aid in the solution of the problems which involve using the properties of integral numbers. To some readers this appendix will appear rather alarming, but they will not need it for the solution of a great number of the puzzles. The ciphers (e.g., Problem 40) and the logical puzzles (like *Confusion at the Rectory*) require no technical knowledge. Occasionally a trial and error method will be quicker than the use of profound reasoning. Everyone who has the type of mind which likes puzzles will be able to find something in the book to his taste: such should be grateful to Caliban for having stimulated interest in some entirely new types of problem.

L. S. PENROSE.

FOR THE GARDEN

The Care and Repair of Ornamental Trees. By A. D. C. LE SUEUR. *Country Life.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Aristocrats of the Flower Border. By G. A. PHILLIPS. *Country Life.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

February is a good month for reading gardening books in general, but an especially good one for these two books in particular. The seed and plant catalogues are pouring in, the first crocuses are out, chocolate-and-yellow, and in a week or two the dark purple-and-gold flames of *Iris Reticulata* will give the signal, the precious and unmistakable signal, that the flower race of the year has really begun. It will be time, very shortly, to plant perennials, to sow seeds, to make the onion bed, to fork over the borders—meanwhile there are still a few weeks when the gardener must garden by the fireside, sowing his imaginary onions on the drawing-room table and forking between the flowers on the drawing-room carpet. During that period every new book on flowers and trees will be a god-send, helping the gardener to turn the last weeks of winter into an imaginary summer and to lay plans that will make the summer itself more gorgeous when it comes. There will still be time, also, for the man who is lucky enough to own woodlands or specimen trees to take a final look at them before the leaves cover their branches and hide their wounds and faults. To this man Mr. Sueur's book on the doctoring of trees will be invaluable. It ought, in fact, to be in the possession of everyone who owns or attends or loves trees; and this means not only every lord of the manor and every duke with vast estates and every park gardener, but everyone with a tree of beauty in his garden at all and every ratepayer who finds pleasure in the plane-trees in the streets of London or the avenues of lime in his own provincial town. "A dead street tree," remarks Mr. Le Sueur, "is a loss to the ratepayer." More than that, we are all owners of forests, of the State forests which every year become a more precious possession to us. Trees are in a sense more precious to a country than its flowers. A flower springs up, has its glory, and is dead again in a month or two. But not a tree: it matures with infinite slowness to its full beauty. Every tree is also, in a sense, a piece of history—a piece of living history into the bargain, doubly precious because it is alive and not dead.

But all this, as Mr. Le Sueur points out, is often overlooked. Trees are taken for granted, as things which, being large, will automatically take care of themselves. Moreover, though the value of a dead tree, as so much timber, can be calculated simply in pounds, shillings and pence, the value of a living tree is inestimable. If one's choicest gentian perishes it is easy to buy a postal order and order another. But if a three hundred-year-old oak dies it is as irreplaceable as a Rembrandt lost at the bottom of the Atlantic. One cannot order a dozen eighteenth-century beeches as one would order a dozen chrysanthemums.

Thus trees need more care and study and protection than the most precious alpine. And it is for this purpose, the purpose of saving trees from disease and mutilation and death, that Mr. Le Sueur has written his book. The book itself is extremely practical, careful and authoritative. The love of trees prompts every word of it. No gardener with trees, especially no public or estate gardener with trees under his care, ought to be without it.

For every book on the care of trees there are a thousand on the care of plants, of herbaceous perennials especially. What the imaginative gardener of to-day needs is a comprehensive and passionate study that will do for border perennials what Farmer's *English Rock Garden* did for alpines. Mr. Phillips's book does not fill this need—it is a little prosaic, and to the ambitious gardener a little uninspiring. But it seems to me an admirable book to put into the hands of a beginner, or indeed anyone who is contemplating the purchase of a plot of virgin earth—or even a plot of not-so-virgin earth—with a view to performing horticultural miracles upon it during the coming summer.

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Louis XV and His Times. By PIERRE GAXOTTE. Translated by J. LEWIS MAY. *Cape.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

It is not often that the publisher's blurb is of much real help to a reviewer; but this book is an exception. "Lytton Strachey and his many imitators," says the jacket, "were all for reducing our heroes and demigods to human and even sub-human proportions. Now it is the other way"! "The fashion seems to be gaining ground of taking some historic character on whom we have been taught to pour forth the vials of our scorn and reprobation, and of proving, from documentary evidence and contemporary report, that he (or she) was really quite a worthy member of society, traduced and slandered by his (or her) contemporaries and perpetually misjudged by a careless and indiscriminating posterity." So we know, at any rate, just what to expect. And it might be urged that the new fashion has at least this to be said for it: a figure it does not succeed in rehabilitating may be safely relegated to the pit for good and all. M. Gaxotte has achieved such a failure.

His tone is extremely vehement, and queerly personal. "The young King has been portrayed as a melancholy, lackadaisical creature, prematurely *blasé*. . . . Pure imagination! Everybody who knew him intimately absolutely denies it." On very little

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provocation he becomes sentimental to the point of tears. "There is something especially moving about the life of an orphan, something that touches the heart." He gives Louis credit for the oddest things—for the sound morality of his Latin compositions, for his expressed wish to model himself on his great-grandfather, even for his purely hypothetical deathbed reflections: and the character that emerges is incomparably flat—not, of course, monstrous, and scarcely interesting enough to be called unsympathetic. Few apologists can have had material so uninspiring. When one forces oneself really to consider this dull man, it becomes obvious, even from the narrative of his admirer, that he was puerile (he used to climb roofs for the sake of shouting at his friends down chimneys): a barbarian (he thought it funny to stamp on a gouty courtier's toes): cold-hearted (after Mme. de Pompadour's death he said in confidence that he had had no affection for her): and empty-headed (for she maintained her position by keeping him amused). He was also "profoundly religious"—that is, he was subject to short but severe fits of piety, brought on by the idea of death, and in those moods would concede anything to get on the right side of his spiritual advisers. Indeed, the best that can be said of him is that he looked charming at the age of six, in his coronation robes. Rigaud's portrait almost disposes one to be won over: but, then, compare that kittenish little successor of St. Louis with the mature Louis XV of the frontispiece!

What *can* have aroused M. Gaxotte to his impassioned vindication? That it was not pure benevolence—that the New Biography does not involve a change of heart—one must conclude from the intemperate language with which he assails harmless persons almost unconnected with the theme. He is, indeed, full of hatreds, and, in particular, violently chauvinistic: the enemies of France are knaves, assassins and traitors to a man. So, of course, are the enemies of Louis, and he tries hard to make it appear that France and Louis were for all political purposes identical: which Louis himself, who thought he had forfeited the affections of his people, might have been surprised to hear. In spite of this identity, it has proved no easy task to get King and people into the same chapters. Louis and public affairs had little contact, which, however, is not to compromise his great powers as a statesman: for he was, we are told, too shy to interfere with anyone unless indeed they teased his favourite cat. How far preferable is the hereditary absolute rule of such a man to the "anti-social day-dreams" of philosophers! And if he did not actually exert himself very often (not till he was sixty, says M. Gaxotte, though he came to the throne at the age of six), why, "men in whom weakness of will is combined with breadth of intellect, have this consolation, they can look down with contempt on those who advise them ill." It must be very consoling to their subjects also.

M. Gaxotte has poured a tide of life and energy into this unlucky book, and at worst it has a gossiping kind of briskness, not quite free from vulgarity, but entertaining. The translation, though too obviously a translation, has retained those qualities.

There is no bibliography. It would have been a piece of the merest pedantry to add one, says M. Gaxotte. K. JOHN

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LE PETIT ABBÉ

Prince Eugène. By PAUL FRISCHAUER. Translated by AMETHE SMEATON. *Gollancz.* 16*s.*

In military history the name of Prince Eugène of Savoy is an important one. He first discarded the view, *de rigeur* among seventeenth-century commanders, that war was no more than a game of chess. Armies, flanked by fortresses and deeply entrenched, watched each other in dreary somnambulance until winter, the loss of some minor escarpment, or fatigue on the part of one of the decrepit and opposing generals decided the issue according to the rules. Then a few towns would change hands, prisoners of birth would be courteously released, and senior officers in astounding uniforms would throng the European capitals until the advent of spring. At that date the siege was, above all other operations, the most important in military tactics—and the etiquette was rigid for both sides. When (and not before) the regulation number of mines had been exploded the citadel surrendered with all the honours of war. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Louis XIV was largely indebted for the overwhelming success of his arms in the first instance to that master of siege warfare, Vauban. But from the moment when Eugène, opposing Marshal Catinat in the basin of the Po, neglected all the time-honoured gambits of the military clique, abandoned the siege of Pignerol and marched *round* it and into France behind the bewildered Marshal's back, a new era in tactics had begun. Vauban had been superseded, and from that day the splendours of the *Roi Soleil* began to dim.

It must not be supposed, however, that the stationary method of waging war was any less destructive (comparatively speaking) than that inaugurated by Eugène, developed so successfully by Marlborough, and brought to fruition nearly a hundred years later by Napoleon and the best of his marshals. It was simply that famine and plague accomplished then what was later brought about more often by human ingenuity and the greater deadliness of the lethal weapon. Eugène himself, in spite of his morbid obsession (a well-known psychological term offers a definition) to get the better of Louis at all costs, was, so far as the word can be used in connection with war, a humane man. He was always careful of his soldier's needs, forbade destruction of crops, insisted that trade should continue under normal conditions of free barter, deplored the excessive severity of army discipline, and never indulged in brutality to a conquered civilian population. But the suspicion remains that a sense of humiliation engendered by physical weakness and a deformity of the mouth and nose led him, more often than was necessary, to assert a superiority over other men—upon the field of battle. Eugène was much more than the first general of his time. Without having invented a famous military epigram, he realised the importance to an army of its commissariat. The rambling, semi-bankrupt domains of Leopold were totally incapable of supporting an army in the field, still less of offering a resistance to the invincible French. Eugène's victories were made possible only by the obstinacy with which he interrupted the holy exercises of the Emperor and his priestly *camarilla* to demand the reorganisation of the State finances, the distribution of stores depots, and the systematic manufacture of army equipment. His success at the Austrian court offers an interesting comparison with his dismal failure at Versailles. By nature he was not of a sanguine disposition. His repulsive appearance, combined with (Herr Frischauer confidently informs us) a tendency to unorthodox sexuality, made it a foregone conclusion that the Sun would never shine on the little abbé. Conti once

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took the trouble to present him formally to Louis who, throughout the interview, pretended not to *see* him. It was inevitable. But the serious-minded young man was more at home among the whispering priests and the gloomy tapestries of Leopold's court—and the Emperor must have felt a sympathy for someone who was even uglier than he was. Although there were still difficulties—delay, superstition, incompetence—he discovered they were not insuperable; and he gradually made an instrument out of the heterogeneous peoples of the Holy Roman Empire which, at Peterwardein, annihilated once and for all the Turkish threat to Europe, held in check the flower of the French armies, and helped Marlborough at Blenheim, Oudenarde and Malplaquet to bring to an end the War of the Spanish Succession. It was an ample revenge for a snub.

Another biography of Eugène in English is overdue, but Herr Frischauer's work in no way supplies the deficiency. His method, combining as it does all the worst faults of the modern school—incoherence, lack of continuity, ornateness, pseudo-psychological innuendo (the list is endless)—results only in confusing and irritating the reader. If ever a man could be judged by his works it was Eugène. He was an historical figure, and must be set in an historical background if a true valuation of his achievements and character is to be reached. Such a man—taciturn, ambitious, hard-working—gives little scope for any other biographical approach. As it is, the book cannot be read without the aid of a European history of the period. (I found Wakeman's *The Ascendency of France* a useful guide through the morass.) To make matters worse there were no footnotes and no index—in which case the large bibliography (117 works are cited) is superfluous as well as pretentious. The translation is, to say the best of it, awkward; and someone should have told the Countess von Zeppelin that "memorist" is not the same word as "memoirist." The proof-reader should not have skipped the redundant "to the Queen" on page 35, "Germany territory" on page 176, or the horrible muddle of the Jesuit motto on page 287. Some good reproductions of period engravings do not atone for the shoddy way in which the book has been given to the public.

RICHARD STRACHEY

SUMMIT AND CHASM

Summit and Chasm. By HERBERT PALMER. *Dent.* 5*s.*

Last year Mr. Herbert Palmer made an assault on our times with his collected poems. In his new volume he renews the attack with a poetic engine which may be described as a combination of tank-gun and ancient ballista. Mr. Palmer is a poet of a changing contemporary world though he has never discovered the fact. He is perpetually chasing dramatic personalities of himself through the centuries, in and out of present moods, around every corner. If he is in rebellion against the latest cliques and schools, it is because, like Tristan Corbière and other *poètes maudits*, he knows instinctively that he must protect his originality, and cling to life rather than to theories. His verse is a complete expression of his disassociating, symbolising individuality. The jingles of Kipling, the strong language which Mr. Masefield carefully segregated are all swept into this medium, with snatches of psalmody, English glees, the pure etherealising of lyric, and jubilant satire. If he is not on a summit, near the precipice brink, look for him in some awful chasm of poetic diction.

Mr. Palmer's poetry expresses the plight of the contemporary poet, dislocated by civilisation and warring upon momentous circumstance. To maintain the vanishing profession of poetry is to be involved in an arduous spiritual and moral struggle, and the staying power is all. It is not possible to accept the complaints of young poets too seriously, for they may be enjoying an economic Wertherism. It takes years to discriminate between the kicks and ha'pence, though one should not despise the fear which causes young poets of to-day to cling together for self-protection, and since there are no readers, to read one another's verse. But Herbert Palmer's indignation has an older ring, for the ear of a spoiled Dunbar or an O'Bruidar. The seventeenth-century Irish poet, I quote Mr. James Stephen's translation—saw an entire craft perishing:

> I will sing no more songs: the pride of my country I sang
> Through forty long years of good rhyme without any avail,
> And no one cared even as much as the half of a hang
> For the song or the singer, so here is an end to the tale.

But Mr. Palmer's passionate concern with the plight of the poetic profession finds for itself a cadence and sudden belief which resolves all his modern incongruities, as in this lyric. "To My Muse":

> Lean over me now, Fafeenee
> For the Devil is standing by,
> And the pantry door is open,
> And it's filled with the blue fly.
> Let the meat foul the blade, and the white haft turn grey,
> We too shall be one for ever when the world has passed away.

All of that lyric gets into the brain and sings there a queer, tantalising tune.

Mr. Palmer is more surprising than those who celebrate the nuptials of Homer and the *café chantant*, because he is discovering sudden convictions. He is tired of unreal idealists who "hoist Heaven's dejected dove":

> Now for new words, strange reflex to your praise—
> Down with the strumpet, I am sick of Love.

He will have

> Not Love, but Justice—whom we gag and hate,
> Love is venereal and a queen of lies.

He looks for the Rod of Aaron, the Rose of Sharon, but in a blackened, smoke-dimmed country hears the miners chanting:

> Mates, the flaming dawn behind is fogged with filth and tears
> We've been mucking up the country for a hundred bleeding years.

In "François Villon and His Friends," he expresses his Blake-like philosophy, for Mr. Palmer has a naive, passionate, paradoxical belief in Christianity, a sincerity which causes him to place Christmas in the middle of the Spring and would have sent him to the stake in ages of faith. He does not deny us, happily, the visionary flash:

> Song's eglantine, the hyacinth cupola
> Or the juniper, Elijah's cloaking tower.

Tradition, however, is not safe in Mr. Palmer's hands. He has found for himself what others are looking for, but is unaware of the fact that in doing so he has managed to upset the entire apple-cart.

AUSTIN CLARKE

BRITISH PAINTING

British Painting. By C. H. COLLINS BAKER and MONTAGUE R. JAMES. *The Medici Society.* 30*s.*

Painters of England. By S. C. KAINES SMITH. *The Medici Society.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The British Masters. By HORACE SHIPP. *Sampson Low.* 6*s.*

A Short Account of British Painting. By CHARLES JOHNSON. *Bell.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

Whatever the shortcomings of the Burlington House Exhibition—and they are many—it has at least served as a pretext for a regular outburst of books, big and little, on English painting, most of which contrive to give the reader a rather more adequate notion of the quality and range of British art than the celebrated exhibition itself. To the reviewer, however, it is a little confusing.

Of this bunch, Mr. Collins Baker's book is far and away the most ambitious; it is for those who take their art seriously, and as such it is wholly admirable. The early chapters, dealing with British art before Hogarth, are its strength. Its avowed weakness is the treatment of the water-colourists: in the introduction Mr. Baker himself laments his "incompetence to deal with them constructively"; but his paragraphs on the art of Cotman are so eloquently satisfying that one could wish him less diffident.

The first chapter is a brilliantly concise summary, by Mr. Montague James, of everything of interest belonging to the Mediaeval period; then, with the portrait of Margaret Beaufort, Mr. Baker takes up the story and continues it down to within hailing distance of the present day, closing on a strong beat with a salute to Wilson Steer and the renaissance of English landscape painting. Although it is all very readable, the book's chief justification is as an aid to leisured study: a great number of works are cited to illustrate the author's points and a still larger number merely listed. There is an extremely useful appendix tabulating representative works in public galleries—about 2,000 of them; and another, more depressing than useful to English readers, cataloguing defections to America.

In this sort of book, obviously there is little place for a display of personal taste, and Mr. Baker has kept prejudice, as distinct from reasoned criticism, well out of the way. One may note, however, a somewhat damping reference to Blake, which at a time when he is so much appreciated can really do nobody any harm, and a certain testiness in face of some of Hogarth's moods.

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There is a huge increase in child marriage in India. Miss Rathbone exposes the futility of the steps hitherto taken to cope with child marriage and suggests remedies.

On the positive side there is a plea for the recognition of George Lambert as the true father of English landscape painting, instead of Richard Wilson; and again, there is a word for the sporting pictures of Ben Marshall: without in the least disparaging Stubbs an excellent case is made out for honouring Marshall as the more truly open-air painter of the two, concerned more with animals in their natural setting than in the stable. There are 140 illustrations, several of them in colour, splendidly chosen and reproduced.

Mr. Kaines Smith's book, also from the Medici Society, also very well got up, but rather sparsely illustrated, is lighter fare altogether. By adopting a strictly narrative form unbroken by footnotes and lists and collected detail, Mr. Smith turns the history of British art into a story. He follows the main channels throughout, leaving the backwaters for the most part unexplored, and the result is a chronological history, on the whole stressing what the museums stress, and written, as it were, on both knees. It is, nevertheless, for those who want to see the broad lines of the art of this country in fairly accurate perspective, satisfactory and very pleasant to read. The receptive reader will emerge knowing for the most part where respect is due, with some sane opinions into the bargain, and only one really serious misconception—that Turner's last phase need not be taken too seriously.

Another narrative comes from Mr. Shipp, who has an extremely English attitude towards art. At the very beginning he leads off with a fulmination against the isolation of art from everyday life, the turning of the studio into a holy of holies, the preoccupation of the critics with technique instead of the spirit of the thing—in short, what he calls "the cult of the North-light." All this, up to a point, is sound enough—truisms are usually fairly safe—but Mr. Shipp goes too far. His book, as a whole, is permeated with the amateur spirit, so peculiarly English and so disasterous in art. It is not an easy book to assess; conversationally written, often superficial, frequently enunciating with considerable pomp notions which others would take for granted, often altogether too man-to-man, too hearty, at the same time it does accomplish what it sets out to do. Those who feel at home in the amateur atmosphere will find themselves well served by it. They will learn, too, not only about the paintings, but also about the men behind them.

Finally, and in sharp contrast to Mr. Shipp, we have the cool professionalism of Mr. Johnson, who has produced the ideal cheap handbook to the exhibition. In a limited space he covers a very wide field, introduces a great deal of detail, and yet always keeps his general outline clear and never loses his sense of proportion. His writing is terse and clear-cut, and repeatedly he strikes deep, even in the most fleeting references: the profundity of his criticism of Turner, for instance, is remarkable in so brief a survey. The book is a success. EDWARD CRANKSHAW

DEALS, NEW AND OLD

Current Monetary Issues. By LEO PASVOLSKY. *Faber and Faber.* 7s. 6d.

Economics of the Recovery Programme. By SEVEN HARVARD ECONOMISTS. *McGraw-Hill.* 6s.

Douglas Delusions. By F. J. DOCKER. *Angus and Robertson.* 4s. 6d.

Economic Salvation. By CLAUD P. G. JACOB. *Thornton Butterworth.* 5s.

The two American books which come first on the list deal with the New Deal and its monetary issues and deserve the attention of all economic students. The first, entitled *Current Monetary Issues* by Leo Pasvolsky of The Brookings Institute, is an informatory analysis of the recent conferences and discussions at Geneva, Washington and London, in their bearings upon the monetary situation, both from its American and its world point of view. Carefully compiled statistical evidence seems to warrant two important conclusions (p. 125), first, "that no definite predictable rise in the commodity price level can be assumed to follow a given depreciation of the currency" (i.e., that the big gold purchase plan will not succeed). Second, "that, once a desired price level had been obtained, by whatever means, no evidence exists that thenceforth that level can be automatically controlled by altering the price of gold." The conclusion of Mr. Pasvolsky's arguments upon the international aspect of the New Deal is pessimistic, for he holds that "the effort to raise American prices by independent monetary action makes it impossible for the world as a whole to establish stable exchanges and to restore the normal functioning of an international monetary system" (p. 130).

The *Economics of the Recovery Programme* by "Seven Harvard Economists" is a study which is decidedly more sceptical than sympathetic of the various aspects of the New Deal. Dr. Schrumpeter, in an introductory chapter on "Depressions," does not admit any failure of capitalism in itself: it is the forcible entrance of political and other emotional forces that interferes with the proper working of capitalism and prevent a national recovery. For "recovery is sound only if it does come of itself" (p. 20). Most of the writers incline to this view, though some of them make considerable concessions in favour of special modes of relief, involving publicly financed schemes of employment and some measure of inflation. The New Deal, in fact, breaks up into three lines of policy—immediate relief of poverty and unemployment, recovery, and permanent reform of the economic system. These are not clearly distinguishable, and a good deal of opportunism is admitted in dealing with their interactions. In order to get industry going, cheap credit is requisite. If the banks will not use the new money provided or guaranteed by Government, on the ground that business men cannot see a profitable market for the products of increased industrial activity, then Government must either step in and take over large existing industries as public services, or else must subsidise, upon a large scale, new public works. The only other alternative is larger continued subsidies for the unemployed out of funds which, when taxes fail, must involve a perilous experiment in inflation. A valuable chapter on "Helping the Farmer" brings out the special character of the agricultural situation, due largely to the deep indebtedness of farmers and their inability to close down their works as industrialists do when depression sets in. Here, of course, politics press in upon economics, compelling the Government to find enormous sums to relieve the mortgage situation, to restrict acreage and output, and to purchase and hold redundant stocks. The farmer wants high prices for a restricted supply of foods and raw materials. But the industrialist wants abundant materials at moderate prices, and the consumer wants cheap food, otherwise the higher money wages which the New Deal tries to furnish are of little use to worker-consumers. The writer upon

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The millionaire merchant

We are indebted to the *Evening Standard* for our "peg" this week. Londoner's Diary tells us that "outsize tailoring orders have been a feature of London life in every century from Beau Brummell to the late Marquess of Anglesey. One single order, for the truth of which I can vouch, was for £3,000. It was given in the early part of this century by Sir Dhunjibhoy Bomanji, the millionaire Bombay merchant. The order included 160 pairs of white trousers. Sir Dhunjibhoy, when placing this order, picked up a large book of patterns, thumbed them through and turned to his tailor. 'Beautiful things, Mr. ——; I'll have them all made up.'" And here is something that "This England" missed, for Londoner goes on to say: "The Indian magnate was brought to this tailor by the late Eugene Sandow, the strong man."

The sting is on the tailor (if you'll forgive us) for the paragraph concludes on this sad note: "To-day, Sir Dhunjibhoy is 63, has indifferent eyesight, and has lost interest in clothes."

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Spent thousands with tailors, so they say—

(It's up to you to continue the verse, but "dingy boy" and "stingy boy" are taboo!)

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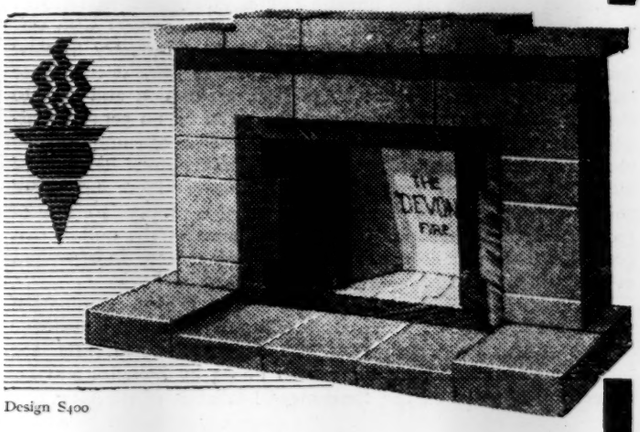

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"Higher Prices" ends with the highly pertinent question "Has it been demonstrated to our satisfaction that supplies of gold adequate in 1922–1929, have become *most* inadequate in 1930–1933?" How the New Deal can be made to work out, so as to give capitalists the necessary profits, and labour the higher wages, without hitting the consumer by high prices, is evidently the problem for which these economists can find no satisfactory solution. This is inevitable, for none of them faces up to the fact that capitalism in its normal working distributes the money income so unequally as to impel a rate of saving and investment soon discovered to be excessive, clogging the markets with unsaleable goods and then forcing the wheels of industry to slow down. Economists committed to the *laissez faire* doctrine are blind to the recurrent necessity of such a situation and seek to evade it, either by pretending that there can be no general maladjustment between rates of production and consumption, or that any tendency towards such maladjustment must be checked by natural economic laws restoring harmony. Here are seven able economic thinkers paralysed for effective proposals either of recovery or reconstruction by the acceptance of the notion that economic laws have an existence and a ruling force independent of the minds of men.

Mr. Docker writes his *Douglas Delusions*, a "critical examination of the Douglas credit proposals" with an intimate knowledge of the financial operations of the business world. By the inclusion of copious quotations from books by Douglas and his adherents, he exposes the fundamental fallacies of the view that the business system does not yield enough purchasing power to consumers to enable them to buy the consumption and capital goods which producers can turn out, because of some inherent vice in banking credits. But though Mr. Docker successfully exposes (with needless vituperation) the weakness of the Douglas analysis and social credit proposals, he leaves the false impression that the present banking system is in effect an entirely satisfactory method of financing business operations, an impression certainly not borne out by the Macmillan Report to which he makes reference. When, for example, he asserts (p. 28) that "the banker is able to lend by way of overdraft out of his cash," he makes an ambiguous statement out of keeping with his later statement that "a bank when it issues an overdraft takes into consideration its cash" (p. 55).

Mr. Claud P. G. Jacob refurbishes the ancient notion of a monetary system based on labour-time. Token Notes are to be issued measuring the average amount of time expended on the production of each sort of goods or services. These Notes can be utilised only for the purchase of a similar amount of other goods or services. This ensures that consumption will equal production without delay. There is, of course, the old difficulty about quality of labour, which undermines the labour-time basis. Degrees of skill, however, can be assessed as now. Since every producer not only produces goods but receives money to buy other goods, the quantity of consumer purchasing-power cannot, as now, be deficient. How the State which issues this token money is to regulate the application of productive resources in accordance with average labour costs, and with due consideration of demand, is not made clear. J. A. H.

STEWED POETRY

Recent Poetry, 1923-1933. Edited by ALIDA MONRO. *Gerald Howe.* 5s.

Anthologies of "modern" poetry are by no means a bad idea, for it is almost impossible to keep up with all the poets alive, and if they are collected into an anthology, one can look through them and see roughly what they are at and the way the world is going. And there is this to be said for Mrs. Monro, that her collection covers a lot of ground and takes in some curiously different poets, so that we can see the world going all ways at once—or, if we prefer to think of it in that way, we can observe the growth and development of contradictions, and the way in which schools and styles have bred within themselves the opposites that have destroyed them. For here are Mr. De la Mare, and Mr. Eliot, and Mr. Auden, all rubbing shoulders, and with their schools around them.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Monro's choice of poets is not very reliable. Mr. Blunden is certainly as important as most of the early Georgians represented, and Mr. Lehmann has been omitted from the "crisis and communism" school. And, where I have been able to check it, the choice of poems from each author's work has not been very satisfactory. There is nothing to give an idea of the achievements of Mr. Aldington in long unrhymed narrative poems. Mr. Auden is made to seem incompetent and hearty, and few very good poems seem to have been included. Equally, it is to Mrs. Monro's credit that there is nothing shockingly bad, and the work of some of the minors included suggests appalling possibilities of sentiment and incompetence in their work.

Perhaps the best thing to do about anthologies of this kind is to see how the poets look side by side, and who can stand invidious comparisons. Without the guide of a whole body of work, one has to try to guess by the actual "feel" of the stuff whether it is good and durable, or only in the fashion for a moment.

The obvious high points of the collections, the poems one can feel pretty sure about, are "Byzantium" and the Eliots. They have all the air of being the real thing, safe to remain in the central corpus of English poetry. There is nothing else that one can feel so sure about, but the poet who most impressed me out of the collection was Empson—very badly represented. There is a solidity, assurance and maturity about his work that gives a feeling of authenticity—the lines are superbly handled, the feeling is impressive, and there can be no doubt of the intelligence of the poet, or of the pleasure it gives. The only other genuinely recent poet I would back is Day Lewis, who seems to me to have a definite quality of his own, not perhaps of the highest importance, but "melodious" and effective. Campbell and Plomer have pleasantly solid and well-built poems, and the Sitwells as a family catch one's eye by their images—there is not perhaps much else to them, but in this they are at least unlike any of the rest. And there are a number of others who catch the attention and suggest possibilities, Madge and Roberts and Quennell particularly. But it is difficult to dismiss any poet on the strength of an anthology of this kind—one can only notice where the lines suddenly move with greater power and assurance, and where one begins to feel something of the confident enduring quality of the great masters. In the main there is an air of very considerable talent and of the best intentions, so that one cannot quite see why there is not a great deal of very good recent poetry. Only the comparison with Mr. Yeats shows that there is really very little. J. H. B.

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SHORTER NOTICES

Tales of My Native Village: Being Studies of Mediaeval Life, Manners, Art, Minstrelsy, and Religion, in the Form of Short Stories. By SIR GEORGE RERESBY SITWELL. *Oxford University Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The unhappy use of the words "short stories" in the title of this delightful study of the early Plantagenet period in England, which presumably has led the publishers to suppose an index could be dispensed with, may also suggest to the reader that there is something in the nature of fiction to be encountered. Really there is nothing of the kind. Though at times, but rarely, the reconstruction of the social life of the period is imaginative, it is only so in a strictly historical sense. The book, indeed, is a valuable addition to the literature on its subject, written by one who has a rare understanding of the dawn of our particular culture. Sir George Sitwell does not minimise in any way the lack of that comfort by which we set such store, but he does make us see and feel the pleasures of a life which for all its sternness was highly decorated. Indeed, the main merits of the book are, first, that it stresses the day by day secular happenings on a manor in Derbyshire; and secondly, that it relates the work of English musicians, painters, goldsmiths and broiderers of the time to the whole of the wide dominions of Henry II, and demonstrates that in these arts England was not a secondary, but the predominant partner. The book is charmingly illustrated with reproductions of mediaeval miniatures.

T. P. O'Connor. By HAMILTON FYFE. *Allen and Unwin.* 16*s.*

Perhaps the best thing that can be said of Mr. Fyfe's biographical study of one of the most genial figures in the history of modern politics, is that O'Connor himself would have loved it. It has just the touches that would have given Mr. Fyfe immediate entrance to the columns of any journal edited by T. P. T. P. the journalist is, indeed, the hero of this story. To resuscitate his role in the Gladstonian Home Rule controversy results in little but the rattling of particularly dry bones. But to revivify his turbulent and fruitful career in Fleet Street, before the coming of the million circulation and after, is possible, and Mr. Fyfe has done it, as it should be done, with gusto. He perhaps gives T. P. too much credit—if it is credit—as the father of the modern newspaper. It was Newnes, though his own adventures were failures, who trained and inspired the young lions who outroared in the end the once rampant beasts of Peterborough Court. But it is a harmless exaggeration, nor was it possible to do justice to T. P. without drawing him a little larger than life. By the way, Mr. Fyfe tells us that young O'Connor on coming to London wrote for the gutter press; but was there, in that day, apart from boys' "bloods" and one or two crime sheets, any gutter press for which to write?

Sulgrave Manor and the Washingtons: A History and Guide to the Tudor Home of George Washington's Ancestors. By H. CLIFFORD SMITH. *Cape.* 15*s.*

The appeal of this admirably compiled history and guide is two-fold. First to the admirers of Washington, mainly, no doubt, Americans by birth or immediate ancestry, and secondly to antiquarians and genealogists and all who have a real sense of the past and its relation to the present. As Lord Lee of Fareham points out in his introduction, Sulgrave Manor was never in any sense a nobleman's seat, was indeed one of the minor manor houses; and its interest, consequently, apart from its relation to the American family of Washington, lies in its admirable representation of the way in which a Tudor gentleman of moderate means laid out his home. Prior to its purchase by the British Peace Centenary Fund, the Manor House fell from its gentle estate, and becoming a farmhouse was subject to much destruction and reconstruction. Happily, however, its great hall, and the principal chamber above it, survived intact as the first Washington of Sulgrave built it, when he purchased the Manor from the King (Henry VIII). Fortunately also, such additions as were made by varying owners are in harmony with the original building. The Trustees have furnished the rooms appropriately with Tudor furniture in the older portion, and with Queen Anne in the wing added in that reign. The descriptions of the house and its furnishing are as technically satisfying as they are aesthetically agreeable.

Beaver, Kings and Cabins. By CONSTANCE LINDSAY SKINNER. *Lovat Dickson.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Miss Skinner has brought the imaginative art of the novelist to this story of the Hudson Bay Company and the North-West Company in their adventures as fur traders along the coast or in the interior of northern Canada. Probably the best chapter in the book is that devoted to the inception and granting of a Royal Charter to the "Governor and Company of adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay," with its references to the Court of Charles II and its curious insight (in an American book not of academic origin) into Charles's character, that "indifferent, pleasure-loving man, who had . . . so important and far-reaching an influence in the development of science, politics and commerce in the modern world." But, of course, the main interest of the author is in the French and English fur traders, their travels and their lives in lonely posts, and in their contacts—friendly or unfriendly—with the Indian tribes, upon whose hunting and trapping grounds they intruded.

Week-end Competitions

No. 205

Set by Clennell Wilkinson

If you could be Mr. Wells's invisible man, just for one short hour; and if you were allowed in that time to do only three things, one of them purely altruistic, and the other two for yourself (robbery being barred), what would you do? We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best suggestion.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Queen St., W.C.2. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, February 23rd.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The results of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION 203

Report by V. S. Pritchett

The deductions made by competitors from their discoveries on the site of the Crystal Palace have filled most of them with cynical gloom. We are apparently ripe for destruction, and Marie Stopes's book clinches the matter. The general opinion was that the Crystal Palace was consecrated to religious rites; although Mr. George Richards was divided between a Convert of the Immaculate Contraception—indicated by the book and a tin inscribed "Three Nuns"—and a summer residence of the Speed Kings, the scenic railway being their track. Mr. Casson fooled amusingly with quotations from the monk, William of Stratford; and his Rameses Macdonald, the enchanter, is a good joke. The Big Bad Wolf was taken to refer, by nearly everyone, to the wolves which infested the heights of Sydenham, and Non Omnia developed this theme well. Mr. Rathkey was excellent in misconstruing the posters; for him they proved that we were ridden not only by influenza, bile and constipation, but by other diseases called permanent waving, beer, soap and cruises. The howitzer did not give rise to the wit I had expected, and a number of competitors made the mistake of writing merely a satirical commentary. Mr. Stuart Piggott struck me as being the best archaeologist—which, in my opinion, puts him sufficiently ahead of the more farcical effort of Mr. J. Stewart Cook.

FIRST PRIZE

It is clear that we have at last discovered an actual temple of the Sterility Goddess, whose existence has been inferred from previous discoveries.

The well-preserved book can only be interpretated as a volume of the Sacred Law, and when our very imperfect knowledge of the script and language of the period is extended, it should throw a flood of light on the ritual and beliefs of the adherents of the Sterility Cult. One or two words can be recognised as occurring in other inscriptions. Most important, of course, is the name of the Goddess, which has hitherto variously been read as STOP or STOPES. This new evidence from the Codex Crystallaticus (as we have decided to name the precious volume) shows the latter form to be the correct reading.*

There seems little doubt that the bust inscribed "C. IVLIVS CAESAR," is that of the consort of the Goddess, whose name is now for the first time revealed.

Of the furnishings of the temple, we have recovered fragments, capable of restoration, of a processional way (which, in its unexpected convolutions up and down, doubtless symbolised to the neophyte the uncertainty of human life), and two musical instruments, one small, and the other typologically related, but exaggerated to a size necessitating a chariot to support it. In our ignorance of the system of musical notation of the pre-Disintegration period, the hymn fragment is still to be assessed at its true worth. But one may note the Theriomorphic designs with which it is adorned, indicating a hitherto unsuspected side of the cult.

The censers of thin metal (two still retaining shreds of incense) came from near the actual shrine, which we have found to have been adorned with pictures representing the Mysteries, among which may be recognised the Drinking of the Sacred Liquid (*Bassguiness*), The Bull Episode from the Bovril Saga, and the Ritual Denunciation (*Missingenos*).

Finally, as to the period of the temple; on stratigraphical grounds, it is difficult to date it as much pre-Disintegration, while the decadent

* There is a possibility that STOPES may be the feminine form of STOP. Cf. the inscription on the votive chariot from the Essex Coast—STOP .E AN. BUY ON. .

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If you have a cold of ancient vintage, it is probably not worth your while at the moment to read this, though if your cold shows signs of turning to 'Flu, it probably is. We are talking rather to the optimist who has had hundreds of colds but still stubbornly thinks he will escape this time. Alas, one day there obtrudes upon our consciousness a little dry tickle at the back of the nose. We loudly say, " It is nought ; it is nought " ; we proceed with the ordinary routine of our public or private avocations ; we write a letter to the *Times* on " The Habits of Stoats," or " The Toll of the Roads." But we know in our hearts that it is of no avail. Before nightfall we are sneezing and —oh, all the rest of it. Horrible

It is at that precise moment that the wise man who has ordered from his chemist a 1/9 bottle of QUINISAN TABLETS starts taking one every two hours. (Any chemist can get them for you promptly if he does not stock them.) The Reader of this—Why, in Heaven's name, did the Victorian writers always call you " gentle " ? Whereas the Victorian Reader was usually an exceptionally pompous, humourless and snotty person—Where were we ?—oh yes, the angry Reader is possibly one of those exceptional cases on whom Quinisan has no effect.

But in most cases Quinisan will definitely stop a cold or Influenza quite dead, sometimes in a night, though sometimes it takes 24 and occasionally even 48 hours.

Quinisan is not quackery. It is a recently discovered Salt of Quinine—Quinine Bisalicyclo-salicylate, and it does very often have a most remarkable effect. Try it, and please don't blame us if you are one of the rare exceptions who get no good out of the stuff, because to the majority it is a god-send. Do you want to hear what Doctors (always called " eminent medical practitioners " in advertisements) say about it ? (Loud cries of " NO.") If, however, you do, write to us and we will tell you.

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N.S.

style of art suggests contemporaneity with the Upper Celluloid Period of Transatlantica.

As to the collapse of this civilisation, the existence of such temples as this described, with the other evidence of the popularity of the Cult, provides abundant cause. STUART PIGGOTT

SECOND PRIZE

. . . This appalling obsession of the later British Semites appears to have reached its zenith in London, the British headquarters, where, as is well known to every schoolboy, St. Hitlerius encountered the most obstinate opposition to His Gospel of Racial Regeneration and Purification.

A recent excavating party in the Suburban Desert, has unearthed a series of finds of unparalleled interest to students of the pre-Hitlerius period. One strange ornament reveals the astonishing extent to which the design of machinery in that age was dominated by a crude and disgusting phallic symbolism.

Among the more notable finds was an effigy of the notorious Semitic leader, " Sir " Oswald Rothermeresky—the features of which illustrate the sensuality and degeneration against which the Holy Nazi Movement had to contend. The thick lips and weak, un-Aryan nose and eyes form a marked contrast to the dignified aquiline features and Nordic strength of the many statues of Hitlerius which we are fortunate to have so well preserved. There is also a curious manuscript which Boltschze states to be the score of a song written by British Semite musicians, in Rothermeresky's pay, in order to discredit Hitlerius. This one compares the Saint to a large and evil wolf, of whom the brave songsters proclaim themselves unafraid !

Boltschze inclines to the theory that the excavating party (of which, of course, he was in charge) had been exceedingly fortunate in stumbling on one of the secret recesses of the Semite leaders of the period, wherein they practised their superstitious and lewd rituals. The wall-pictures, of which portions remain, depict grossly misshapen nude females and bottles of the secret draughts, such as " Bass " and " Guinness," with which the Semites revived their flagging energies for further debauches. An obscenely shaped Megaphone, a secret underground railway (for privately conveying worshippers to the recess), the tin containers of " cigarette " (a drug inhaled by the devotees to stimulate their wild exertions), and an intact copy of the infamous " Contra-ception " ritual by the notorious Semitic leader Stopez, who devoted the whole of his misspent life to propaganda designed to induce the Aryan races to commit racial suicide. . .

The whole of the find will be shortly on view at the Goering-Goebbels Nordic Museum, New Berlin, S.W.7. J. STEWART COOK

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 60.—TETRAHEDRAL.

Professor Surd makes himself a wooden model of a regular octahedron. On four adjacent faces of this octahedron (i.e., on four faces having a common vertex) he writes the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 ; on each of the other four faces he writes the number already written on the face parallel to it. He then cuts out four regular tetrahedra, the faces of which are identical in size with the faces of his octahedron. He writes on each face of one of them the number 1 ; on each face of a second the number 2 ; on each face of a third the number 3, and on each face of the fourth the number 4. Then, sending for his young granddaughter he invites her to build up from the octahedron and the four tetrahedra a larger regular tetrahedron.

This of course, she does without any difficulty.

The total of the numbers on the several faces of this larger tetrahedron will be anything from 4 to 16. *What is the chance that they will total* 10 *on each of the four faces ?*

PROBLEM 58.—FIVE CARD TRICK.

My answers to this problem are empirical. I am engaged on a full analysis of it, which will take some time, but I have already examined all *likely* plays and am satisfied that the answers are as follows :

(1) *The Curate was wrong to choose to play first.*
(2) *The Colonel was wrong to play second.*
(3) *The Curate should lead the* 1.

At the time of writing, I have not had many answers.

Is this, I wonder, because solvers find the problem difficult, or because they find it dull ? For me, it has exceptional fascination.

PROBLEM 57.—THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

A set of Low's Cartoons goes to " Patience." *Ten* points are awarded for this problem.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the first sender of a correct solution.

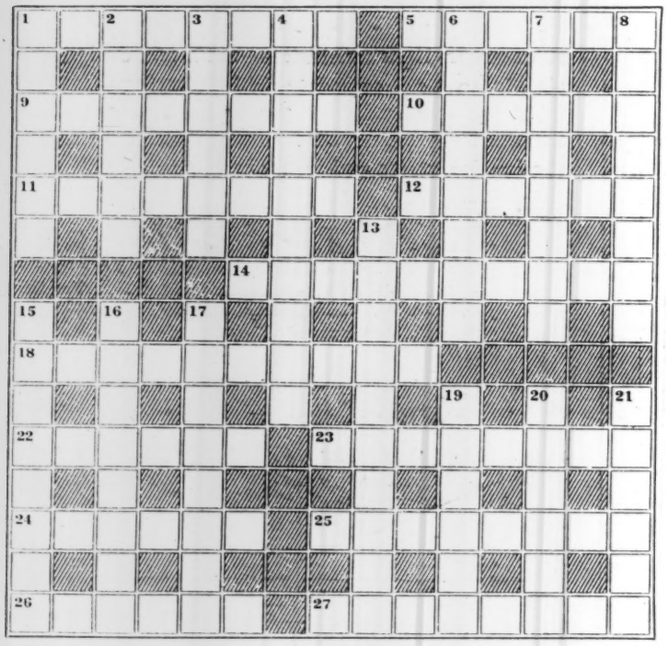
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points, a solver is entitled to a prize, consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150.

Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope ; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 206

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to " CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Queen Street, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday.



Set by L.-S.

LAST WEEK'S WINNER

The winner of last week's crossword is Mrs. Bayne, The Watch House, Strand Lane, W.C.2.

ACROSS

1. Plot.
5. Indian cloth of gold.
9. Architectural cross arm.
10. One unquiet in repose.
11. Psalm LI.
12. Indecisive seats.
14. Fearful result of Nimrod losing his head and getting mixed up in a story.
18. Condense.
22. Starchy in manner and almost suitable for diabetes.
23. Gives the poet his immortal verse.
24. Score.
25. A red rover turns forester.
26. Touchstone illustrated a courteous one.
27. Not an intestinal appendix.

DOWN

1. Polite kings are.
2. Sideways and upside down.
3. How the Australians should cover themselves against leg theory bowling ?
4. An uncommon place for peers.
6. Veiled aspersion.
7. My second eat my first ; my whole may be smoked.
8. 16 to the canary.
13. Associated with fire before meat.
15. Wickedly left.
16. 10 clues in this one.
17. Gavin Dishart was a small example.
19. What Rechabites take to pawn.
20. The choice seems to lie between a saint and an editor.
21. Seminary for a fast expert's disciples.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

NOTES :—Pewrent, Pew in *Treasure Island* ; Small beer, *II Henry VI*, iv, 2 ; Totality, Italian Fascism aims at a totalitarian state.

B	■	C	■	P	■	A	L	D	E	B	A	R	A	N
A	D	O	N	A	I	S	■	R	■	R	■	U	■	A
C	■	M	■	S	■	T	R	A	D	E	S	M	E	N
T	R	E	A	T	E	R	■	F	■	A	■	M	■	T
E	■	A	■	I	■	O	F	F	A	S	D	Y	K	E
R	E	G	I	M	E	N	■	■	■	T	■	■	■	S
I	■	A	■	E	■	O	■	T	■	■	■	A	■	■
A	M	I	D	S	U	M	M	E	R	N	I	G	H	T
■	■	N	■	■	■	Y	■	M	■	E	■	U	■	O
S	■	■	■	W	■	■	■	P	E	W	R	E	N	T
P	I	M	P	E	R	N	E	L	■	W	■	C	■	A
I	■	E	■	A	■	O	■	E	P	O	C	H	A	L
C	O	C	K	S	C	O	M	B	■	R	■	E	■	I
E	■	C	■	E	■	S	■	A	I	L	M	E	N	T
S	M	A	L	L	B	E	E	R	■	D	■	K	■	Y

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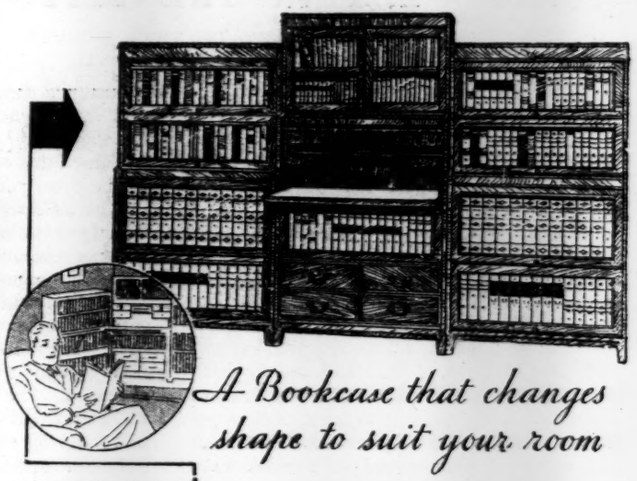

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T.T. 1318

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

THE NEXT DEVALUATION—CONTROLLING THE STOCK EXCHANGE—SPECULATIVE AMERICAN STOCKS—RALEIGH CYCLE

THE forcing tactics of President Roosevelt in the currency game are beginning to work. The next country to devalue its currency is Czechoslovakia. (Percentage of devaluation suggested is $16\frac{2}{3}$ per cent.) The Czech Prime Minister has explained that no inflation is intended, but that the export trade must be protected. These are the classic excuses which will doubtless be advanced in all future devaluations. Czechoslovakia exports mainly manufactured goods, but other "gold" countries have suffered as severely, and there is no particular reason why Czechoslovakia should secure a trading advantage over her neighbours. Germany, Hungary and Austria, by the abuse of the "blocked" currency system, are already "devalued" for practical export purposes, but France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and Poland, continue to wear the shackles of an over-valued currency for no logical reason. Short of an early and sharp rise in the American price level, a devaluation of the franc is the only way out of our dilemma of having the pound either over-valued in relation to the dollar, or under-valued in relation to the franc. It has been suggested that if the gold franc were to be 20 per cent. devalued, i.e., if the mint parity were to be changed from 526.243 francs to 657.80 per ounce of gold, it would give the pound a better chance. Assuming that the American price-level justified a return to our old parity with the dollar (4.86), the equivalent franc rate would be 91.3, and the sterling price of gold 144*s*. So let us hope that the French will save us and themselves. For some time the French Government will be preoccupied with its internal disorders and scandals and will not think about the franc. Moreover, it is a weak Government, and perhaps dare not consider devaluation. But devaluation without inflation or a period of currency chaos will come to be accepted, perhaps sooner than we expect, as the least objectionable course of action for the gold countries.

* * *

It is not known how far President Roosevelt will go in support of the Fletcher Bill for the control of American Stock Exchanges. This Bill makes the manipulation of security prices, including all "pool" operations, a criminal offence. So-called "wash" sales, i.e., buying and selling orders by the same group which wash each other out, are prohibited. The dissemination of misleading information, the cornering of securities, and the secret pegging of security prices, are expressly outlawed. Directors, officers and stockholders holding more than 5 per cent. of the outstanding stock must not speculate in the securities of their companies. In order to check excessive speculation, margin requirements are fixed at a minimum of 60 per cent. of the values of securities traded (the existing margin is from 25 per cent. to 35 per cent.). Members of the Stock Exchange are forbidden to borrow except from the Federal Reserve or member banks, and their borrowings, plus customers' deposits, must not exceed ten times the amount of assets used in the business of a brokerage house. Customers' securities cannot be hypothecated or lent without the customers' consent (it is extraordinary that such a practice should still be allowed). The Bill empowers the Federal Trade Commission to regulate the Stock Exchanges—apart from matters of internal discipline—and to have access to the accounts of dealers and brokers and of the Stock Exchanges themselves. Further, the Commission may send inspectors into the Exchanges and to meetings of the Exchange committees. The Exchanges are to pay annual registration fees equalling 1/500th of 1 per cent. of the total amount of sales during the preceding year. Punishment for violators of the new law is fixed at a maximum sentence of ten years' imprisonment and a fine of $25,000. The Stock Exchanges themselves are liable to fines aggregating $500,000. The Bill also provides for the recovery of damages by civil process by those injured by the unlawful activities of Stock Exchange members. This drastic Bill is to become effective, if passed, on October 1st, 1934.

* * *

Any Bill which kills Stock Exchange banditry and encourages sound investment is to be welcomed. At the same time, efficient Stock Exchanges, under a capitalist system, are essential to business activity. It is just as important to have a free market in titles to securities as in titles to other goods. Moreover, the speculator performs a useful function in encouraging enterprise when trade is depressed and in checking excessive enterprise when trade is booming. While pool operations and the rigging of markets should be stamped out, it would be unwise to prohibit short selling or buying on margin entirely. In this country, dealings in the gilt-edged market are for cash and in all other securities fortnightly settlements are effected except that "carry-over" facilities can be arranged. For a short time after we suspended the gold standard, dealings in all securities were made for cash, but it was found that this practice tended to accentuate market swings, for the market was only one way. Short-selling is the best corrective to an unhealthy boom and covering by bears the real support of a depressed market. Carry-over facilities might be prohibited without detracting from the freedom of markets, but the best check to excessive or anti-social speculation in this country is for the banks to withhold credit facilities from Stock Exchange members. Meanwhile the Stock Exchange Committee should consider what provisions of the American Bill they might adopt. It is absurd to suppose that markets are never "rigged" in London or that pools never operate in British securities.

* * *

One effect of the Fletcher Bill should be to further the rise in sound fixed-interest securities in American markets. Now that President Roosevelt has determined upon a "sound money," gold-backed inflation, capital will return to fixed-interest stocks, and the long-term rate of interest will decline. Nevertheless, we should not imagine that speculation will be stamped out in America. The English love of a dividend-paying stock is not shared on the other side of the Atlantic. Indeed, when an American equity stock starts paying a dividend it loses popularity, for it enables the statisticians to start valuing it. Equities standing at rubbish-prices are preferred by the pools. Here is the record of six equity stocks selling under $5 in 1933:

SELLING UNDER $5 IN 1933.

	1933 Prices. Low.	1933 Prices. High.	Present Price.	% Rise Over 1933 Low.
Associated Dry Goods ..	3½	19½	16½	371.43
Baldwin Locomotive ..	3½	17	13⅜	285.71
Celanese of America ..	4½	56¼	39⅜	769.44
Hudson Motors	3	23⅝	20⅞	595.83
U.S. and Foreign.. ..	3⅛	17	12⅝	304.0
U.S. Rubber	2⅜	23½	19⅞	736.84

On the "pool" principle the speculator to-day should consider the equity stocks selling under $10, for example:

	Prices 1933. Low.	Prices 1933. High.	Present Price.
1. Coty	2⅜	9½	7¾
2. Electrical and Musical Industries..	⅞	5¾	5⅝
3. International Carriers	2⅞	10½	9½
4. Tri-continental	2¾	8½	5¾

1. Earnings for nine months of 1933 amounted to 25 cents per share. Capital only 1,537,435 shares of no par value. The shares were quoted at 82½ in 1929, when dividends of $2 per share were paid.

2. All preference dividends arrears have been paid off.

3. A railway fixed trust but somewhat overloaded with Milwaukee, Chicago and St. Paul preferred stock and Pennsylvania common shares.

4. An investment trust which up to September, 1933, did not quite cover its preferred stock as to capital or dividends.

* * *

An interesting new issue is announced. Raleigh Cycle Holdings Company is to be formed with a capital of £2,250,000 divided into £1,000,000 5 per cent. (participating up to 6 per cent.) preference shares and £1,250,000 ordinary shares to acquire the whole of the share capital of Raleigh Cycle and 90 per cent. of the capital of Sturmey-Archer Gears. One million preference shares are to be issued at 21*s*. to yield on the full 6 per cent. dividend £5 14*s*. 3*d*., and 500,000 ordinary shares at 25*s*. to yield on earnings 9 per cent. Last year's profits amounted to £201,542, so that the fixed preference dividend is apparently covered over four times. The preference shares participate with the ordinary shares up to 6 per cent. after the latter have received 5 per cent. Dividends of 6 per cent. on both classes of shares require £135,000, so that the full preference dividend may be said to be covered 1½ times. So far from being an obsolete mode of locomotion and pleasure, cycling has in recent years enjoyed a minor boom, and the humble push-bike is no longer regarded as a poor relation to the motor cycle in the annual shows. Nevertheless, except in the cities of Oxford and Cambridge, we lag far behind the cycling peoples of France, Belgium and Holland. The connoisseur may turn up the nose at all mass-produced cycles, but of the mass-production jobs the Raleigh is outstanding. The dividends may not be, like the machines, "guaranteed for ever," but the issue seem likely to prove a great success.

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The Committee would be prepared to apply to the Board of Education for the exceptional recognition of any specially qualified candidate as Principal.
Forms of application and particulars of the appointment may be obtained from the Registrar, College of Arts and Crafts, Leicester, and should be returned to the undersigned on or before February 28th, 1934.
F. P. ARMITAGE,
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E. E. LOWE,
Director.

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Applications are invited from graduates for the post of Tutor in charge of the Mary Worthington Wing. Duties to commence September 29th, 1934.
Further particulars may be obtained from the REGISTRAR, the University, Manchester, to whom all applications should be sent not later than Saturday, March 10th.

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